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PROBLEMS OF COMMUNISM

NOVEMBER
DECEMBER | 1964

THE IRON CURTAIN TODAY

TRAVEL & TOURISM *Mary Jane Moody*

ECONOMIC STATISTICS *Leon M. Herman*

LITERARY CENSORSHIP *Maurice Friedberg*

Anti-Religion & Antisemitism *Harry Willetts / Jacques Fernier*

In the Russian Provinces *Anthony Sylvester*

Consumption & Welfare *Vaclav Holesovsky*

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PROBLEMS OF COMMUNISM

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On the Fall of Ivan Alexandrovich Pyriev

(In lieu of a commentary on the fall of N. S. Khrushchev)

The following item is reprinted in slightly abridged form from Izvestia, *October 4, 1964:*

THIS ALL HAPPENED this summer in the city of Gorki. The film "The Light of a Distant Star" was being made. The venerable, exacting director was selecting actors for the mass scenes. Of course, the cinema is a delicate thing. The people of Gorki know this very well: film directors have come many times to the banks of the Volga to shoot films. But this one, high-ranking and honored, was a surprise to them right at the outset. He was obviously nervous.

Well, the people on the Volga thought he probably can't get the types he wants for his mass scenes, or something is wrong with the overall layout, so he is irritated, this cinematographer who has been famous since childhood.

But they had these thoughts only at the beginning. Later events developed with truly cinematographic speed. The director changed beyond recognition. Armed with a microphone, he began pouring out such obscenities that the former cart-drivers of the Nizhny Novgorod fair, had they been there, would probably have died of envy. At first no one could understand. It seemed that the director was simply in a creative ecstasy and was pronouncing some incomprehensible incantations. But little by little everyone began to understand—Gorki schoolgirls, women students and respectable mothers who had been invited to the filming.

The editors have received letters from residents of the city of Gorki (we know that such letters had also been sent to the Ministry of Culture, party-state control agencies, and other state and public organizations) describing the film director's behavior with indignation. Residents of the city have sent similar letters to the editors of the newspaper *Gorkovskaia pravda* (Gorki Truth). Comrade Barsukov of the newspaper talked with many of the letter-writers and concluded: "Nothing of this sort has ever happened in Gorki before. After all, other directors have made films, too, and everybody has had a high opinion of them. It is unpleasant even to remember the time this director spent in Gorki. . . ."

WE DO NOT WANT to quote from the letters at length here. Still, to give the reader an idea how uninhibited the "celebrity" had become, let us list a few of his "works of art." He shouted—and this at the participants in the mass scenes!—"skunks," "idiots" and far worse expressions, and at times he used the lowest gutter language (how consonant this is with the urbane manners of the professor and epicure!). The pensioner I. Getlikherman notes: "It is too embarrassing to write what he calls women. I participated in the filming of the mass scenes, but I left the set. It was impossible to listen to this flow of obscenities, which was audible over long distances on the public-address system. It was simply astonishing that

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this man, who is so popular (perhaps this is what turned his head, as sometimes happens) a director known all over the country, could behave so disgracefully."

This disgusting incident could not pass unnoticed, of course. The Gorki residents raised the question of the moral complexion of the artist and called him to order. Representatives of the city's public organizations and officials of the provincial party committee talked with the director and warned him that such behavior is intolerable but, apparently in deference to his venerable age and past service, decided not to give wide publicity to the case, especially as he promised to behave himself in the future.

However, as time has shown, he did not keep his promise and has continued to act in a manner identical or similar to the above. . . . And so, the snowball of filth kept growing. A number of things—many years of unsupervised activity, conceit and the sycophancy of bootlickers—have combined to stupefy the director so badly that he indeed had begun thinking of himself as a man above criticism or judgment.

BUT LET US NOT tantalize the reader any longer; the man we are talking about is USSR People's Artist Ivan Alexandrovich Pyriev, film director.

We have read the report of a commission of the Moscow Film Studio party committee which studied the case of the director and producer I. Pyriev. A few pages present the portrait of a man who is oblivious to party and civic responsibility, to his colleagues and audience. The party committee discussed the Gorki episode and many, many others. It was emphasized that the Communist I. Pyriev does not participate in the life of his party organization, is peremptory with his comrades, does not attend meetings, forgets to pay membership dues, and has not paid trade union dues for 13 years. . . .

I. Pyriev's moral image is ugly. His "family" affairs have become the talk of film workers, and not of them alone. . . . As far as critical remarks are concerned, there was indeed a "state of total silence" around I. Pyriev. The atmosphere of all-forgiveness or, let us be frank, of sycophancy, which is completely incompatible with all the norms of our life, did its work. The "Maestro" was becoming more and more unrestrained, while some people called this "the pranks of genius."

To be sure, I. Pyriev has done a great deal for our film art. We do not want to resemble those who are now prepared to discredit everything in I. Pyriev's life and work. We simply would like to say that the background against which this work was done is ugly and shabby! To be forthright, it is so contrary to the spirit of Soviet creative life that one simply cannot understand this dichotomy in the life of an experienced man and an experienced artist.

As we have already said . . . Pyriev received a reprimand to be entered in his personal dossier. Let us not pass judgment on the measure of sanction. This is not the only point. Another thing is important: Does I. Pyriev know that the time of persuasion passed long ago? The time has come to answer for his actions. A high rank entails obligations, and the higher the rank, the more is asked of its holder.

WE PREFER TO HOPE that I. Pyriev will understand all this, that he will apologize through the newspaper to the people he insulted in Gorki, that he will have the courage, if you will, to start many things in his life afresh, and that, above all, he will understand this: The people extol you, but the people can also take the honors and titles away from you.

Painful though it may be, we should also like to say the following: We know the dead stars continue to send light, as it were, to earth for many hundreds and thousands of years. Sometimes we do not even know that the star itself no longer exists.

Actors of the theater and films who are liked by the people are called "stars." Of course, there is no such official name, and we attach a special meaning to this word that has nothing in common with the meaning of this word in the West. Over there, the light of a day "star" often lies in the glitter of wealth, in the vulgar tinsel of dubious fame, in cheap sensation.

Our audience sees popular actors and directors as good teachers of life, wise counselors, models of emulation. They live the same life as the filmgoers and talk to them as friends from the screen and the stage. Otherwise a "star" will die. I. Pyriev should have remembered this when he made the film "Light of a Distant Star."

Notice to Our Readers

This issue of *Problems of Communism* was ready to go to press just as "advancing age and failing health" forced the sudden retirement of Nikita Sergeievich Khrushchev—hence some outdated designations and references on these pages. We will examine Khrushchev's dismissal as well as its implications in the next issue.

—The Editors

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The Iron Curtain Today

EDITORS' NOTE: What precisely is meant by the term "closed society"? What does the expression "Iron Curtain" refer to? What changes, if any, have taken place in the Soviet Union's passion for secrecy and secretiveness since Stalin's death in 1953? The following three articles address themselves to these questions. In the first, the author demonstrates the persisting institutional obstacles to any meaningful intercourse between the citizens of the USSR and the outside world. The second provides a glimpse into the omissions, half-truths and outright falsifications which still comprise so much of the economic data published by the Soviet Government. And the third focuses on the somewhat amorphous yet astonishingly tenacious nature of one of the oldest institutions in Russia, Tsarist and Soviet alike—the literary censor.

Tourists in Russia and Russians Abroad

By Mary Jane Moody

Occasionally the Iron Curtain surrounding the Soviet Union seems to waver and foreign observers are tempted to conclude that "liberalization" is under way. Now that personal contacts between Soviet citizens and foreigners are possible, it is sometimes assumed that such relationships develop in ways which do not differ from friendships among people of other nationalities. To investigate how free human contacts are across the curtain it is necessary to examine the travel patterns of Soviet citizens outside the USSR and of foreigners within the Soviet Union, and to determine what controls are exercised when travel is permitted. The quick-trip tourist should be considered and also the delegation member who may be staying

Miss Moody is an American lawyer with an interest in the field of Soviet studies. This is her first contribution to Problems of Communism.

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abroad for a longer period of time. The situation of embassy personnel and foreign correspondents is sufficiently different to exempt them from consideration.

During the 1920's and the early 1930's a certain amount of contact between citizens of the Soviet Union and the outside world occurred. The number of these meetings was small by present standards. It was nonetheless not trivial when compared to 1947-53, the years when contacts were at their nadir. Present Soviet policy is to give official sanction to tourism and exchanges of persons. But while Stalin's death has brought changes, the available evidence suggests that contacts between Soviet citizens and foreigners are still far from normal by the standards of democratic societies.

Travel—East and West

Intourist statistics show that approximately the same number of Soviet citizens travel abroad as foreigners visit the USSR, giving the impression that Soviet people travel no more and no less than anyone else. A close look at the figures shows that this impression is not correct.

In 1960, for example, Intourist's figures show that 711,609 travelers went to the Soviet Union from all countries, while 730,150 Soviet citizens traveled abroad.[1] Most of the Soviet travelers journeyed as members of official delegations (602,503). Others went abroad to participate in sports events (4,165). The remaining 123,482 travelers were tourists. Taking the United Nations estimate of 214,400,000 as the population of the Soviet Union in 1960, a figure of 123,482 tourists means that approximately one out of every 1,737 Soviet citizens traveled abroad for pleasure in 1960.

Intourist statistics also give information on the destination of Soviet travelers. The majority of Soviet tourists travel inside the Soviet bloc. No more than 14,000 Soviet tourists appear to have journeyed beyond the Iron Curtain in 1960, and they represent only one in every 15,314 Soviet citizens.

Of the 14,000 tourists going outside the Soviet bloc in 1960, 673 visited the United States. This represents one out of every 318,573 Soviet citizens. Approximately the same number of American tourists visited the Soviet Union in 1960 as Soviet citizens traveled for pleasure in all non-bloc countries. The 14,209 Americans visiting the USSR represent one out of every 12,668 US citizens (taking 180 million as the 1960 population of the United States). Thus the American citizen, statistically speaking, was 25 times as likely to see the Soviet Union in 1960 as his Soviet counterpart was apt to tour the United States.

This lopsided picture does not apply solely to travel between the United States and the USSR. The chart on p. 5 shows Intourist's full statistics on tourist travel between the Soviet Union and non-bloc countries. By including population estimates for each country, it is possible to calculate in a similar manner the mutuality of travel between the Soviet Union and other non-bloc countries.

The chart shows that citizens of all non-bloc countries except India were more likely to visit the Soviet Union in 1960 than Soviet citizens were to visit the non-bloc countries. The mutuality of travel between the Soviet Union and the United States was more marked than that between the USSR and Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, or Norway. While India came closest to showing an equal likelihood of travel interchanges with the Soviet Union, Norway represented the opposite extreme: a Norwegian was 216 times as likely to visit the USSR as a Soviet citizen was to visit Norway.

The statistics for 1960 are not completely representative. Despite provisions of the US-Soviet cultural exchange agreements favoring the promotion of tourism,[2] the number of Soviet citizens touring the United States diminished from 673 in 1960 to 450 in 1961. The same statistic for 1962 is only 77.[3] In 1963 the figure

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[1] Intourist statistics for 1960 are taken from *Development of Tourism, Report of US Travel Mission to USSR*, June-July 1961, pp. 29-30. Complete statistics for later years are not available. (According to an Associated Press dispatch of Oct. 21, 1964, Tass recently reported that 932,000 foreigners visited the USSR in the past year—Ed.)

The US Travel Mission, referred to frequently in this article, was a group of six private citizens and one US Government representative who spent two weeks in the USSR in the summer of 1961 studying ways to increase and facilitate exchange visits. The mission was authorized in the US-USSR exchange agreement concluded in 1959.

[2] Four US-Soviet exchange agreements have been concluded, in January 1958, November 1959, March 1962, and most recently February 1964. All contain a promise "to promote the development of tourism" though the explicit language elaborating this promise varies from treaty to treaty, reflecting the difficulty of reaching agreement on a reciprocal range of tourist privileges. For the texts, see *Treaties and Other International Acts Series* (*TIAS*), Nos. 3975, 4362, 5112, and 5582, published by the US Department of State, Washington, D. C.

[3] Statistics for 1961 and 1962 are from *Report on Exchanges with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe*, No. 20, Jan. 1, 1963, p. vii, prepared by the Soviet and Eastern European Exchanges Staff of the US Department of State.

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went up to slightly over 100.[4] The explanation for the small number of Soviet tourists varies. Boris Krylov, Head of the American Countries Department of the State Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, has recently stated that the small number of Soviet tourists to the United States is explained by the high cost of the trip.[5] This cost has been estimated at approximately 850 rubles ($935) for a two-week trip.[6] While this may be the official position it does not explain why there should be such a large percentage variation from year to year. Nor does it agree with the unanimous belief of members of the 1961 US Travel Mission to the USSR that there were approximately 500,000 Soviet families able to afford the trip.[7] It is common for Soviet government representatives to claim privately that lack of foreign currency is the real reason for the limited number of travelers. Yet if one considers the number of dollars taken into the USSR by tourists from the United States, it is obvious that the Soviet Union has a very favorable balance of trade in the tourist business with respect to the United States.[8] The real explanation for the small number of Soviet tourists may be quite different: the process of selecting the tourists shows that security considerations may play an important role.

Selection of Tourists

The procedure for travel abroad, as Intourist describes it, is relatively simple. Soviet citizens make arrangements for foreign tours through their trade unions. Each major regional trade union works from a "plan" for travel for the year, which it receives from Moscow. Travel posters announce the formation of travel groups and specify the countries where tours will go and when. In speaking with the US Travel Mission to the USSR in 1961, the then acting Minister of Foreign Trade, Nikolai N. Smeliakov, specifically said that the USSR has no official restrictions on travel to the United States[9]—or, presumably, elsewhere. Soviet

[4] This is the Soviet estimate: See Boris Krylov, "Soviet-American Cultural Exchanges Expanding," *USSR*, July 1964, p. 6.
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] William D. Patterson, "Can Impulse to Travel Ease Crisis?" *The Travel Agent*, Sept. 25, 1961, p. 83.
[7] Report of US Travel Mission, *loc. cit.*, p. 12.
[8] The number of US citizens visiting the USSR reached its peak in 1960, topping 14,000 according to Intourist. It dropped to about 12,000 in 1961, and to about 9,000 in 1962. The 1963 figure is in dispute: the Department of State sets it at 5,495, while Boris Krylov (see note 4 above) asserts it is about 16,000.
[9] William D. Patterson, "19,973 Ambassadors with Portfolio," *The Travel Agent*, Aug. 10, 1961, p. 87.

Travel to and from the Soviet Union: 1960

	Travel from USSR	Travel to USSR	Population *	Travel Ratio**
Austria	848	866	7,049,000[a]	31.
Belgium	476	925	9,104,000[a]	46.
Finland	3,197	10,369	4,477,300[b]	156.
France	1,398	7,920	45,730,000[c]	27.
(West) Germany	3,207	3,302	55,577,000[b]	3.9
Great Britain	1,127	5,526	52,675,094[d]	20.
India	216	390	438,000,000[e]	1.1
Italy	1,466	1,997	50,763,000[b]	5.7
Netherlands	394	501	11,417,254[b]	24.
Norway	91	329	3,587,000[f]	216.
Sweden	793	4,200	7,498,770[c]	15.
United States	673	14,209	180,000,000[g]	25.
	13,886	50,534		

* Population figures are taken from the *1962 World Almanac*, which cites sources as follows: [a] UN estimate 1959. [b] Government estimate 1960. [c] Government estimate 1961. [d] Government provisional estimate 1961. [e] Preliminary census 1961. [f] UN estimate 1960. [g] US Census Bureau 1960 (rounded off roughly to include members of the armed forces serving overseas.—J.M.)
** The figures in this column show the frequency of travel to the USSR from each foreign country listed, as a multiple of the frequency of travel to that country from the USSR. "Frequency of travel" is determined by dividing the number of travelers into total population of the country concerned.

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tourists may not, of course, travel alone, and it is not clear under what circumstances non-union members can arrange to join tourist groups.

What Intourist further neglects to describe is the rigorous clearance procedure that is required before a Soviet citizen may become a member of one of the tourist groups sponsored by his trade union. Paragraph 5 of the Statute on Entry into the USSR and Exit from the USSR establishes the requirement of an exit visa or its equivalent for a Soviet or foreign citizen leaving the USSR.[10] The final provision of the statute, paragraph 16, refers to "regulations" which govern its application.[11] While these regulations are unpublished and not obtainable, it is possible nonetheless to deduce something of their nature from other evidence. First of all, it is clear that there is no *right* to travel abroad. The exit visa is not merely a formality. Soviet citizens occasionally confirm that there is a selection process. A Leningrad teacher, speaking with one reporter, explained: "Some people behave badly abroad and disgrace their country. The Soviet Union . . . selects only worthy representatives of the USSR to tour abroad." [12] This selection procedure is so taken for granted inside the USSR that Soviet citizens often assume other governments must impose similar controls on their citizens. To cite a characteristic example, students of the Leningrad Radio Polytechnicum wrote to *Izvestia* complaining of the behavior of one Mr. Edwards, a member of a British delegation that visited the polytechnicum. Addressing themselves to Mr. Edwards, the students wrote: "Of course, if we were your authorities we would not give you any more visas for travel abroad, lest you disgrace your compatriots." [13]

The procedure requires that the would-be tourist must fill out a series of questionnaires, write up biographical accounts, and present numerous photographs. In addition, he must obtain references from the head of his place of employment, the chairman of the branch of the trade union to which he belongs, and the party secretary at his place of work. These documents are sent to the Committee for State Security (KGB), where a thorough background investigation of the prospective tourist is conducted. Some idea of the process involved can be gotten from former citizens of the USSR who are no longer on Soviet soil. Mikhail Antonovich Klochko, a chemist now living in Canada, has described his interview with a KGB official prior to receiving permission to attend (in an unofficial capacity) a scientific meeting abroad.[14] Only after approval is granted can the Soviet citizen obtain a passport for foreign travel, his exit visa, and his ticket.

The selection process affects different people differently. The background of the prospective tourist and his destination are relevant factors. It seems clear that it is harder for single persons to receive permission to travel abroad than for married people with family members who will remain behind. As one American member of the US Travel Mission to the USSR reported after returning home, "it is customary for only one member of a household—usually the male head—to travel abroad." [15] Soviet citizens of Jewish nationality have expressed the belief that their minority affiliation makes it more difficult for them to obtain exit visas.[16] Those who have already traveled abroad (and returned home) feel that this factor gives them an advantage over an untested traveler when it comes to a request for another trip.[17] The destination of the tourist is also important since statistically the plan's quota for bloc travel is much higher than that for countries outside the socialist camp. A clue to the prevailing ratio is provided by the fact that 82.6 percent of all

[10] Statute approved by Resolution No. 660 of the Council of Ministers of the USSR on June 19, 1959, SP SSSR 1959, No. 13, p. 80. The text of this Statute is reproduced in *Sbornik normativnykh materialov po voprosam vneshnei torgovli SSSR—Vypusk I* (Collection of Normative Materials on Questions of USSR Foreign Trade—Issue I), Moscow, 1961, pp. 272-75.

[11] The text of this provision of the statute indicates that such regulations were originally the joint concern of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR, and the Committee for State Security under the Council of Ministers of the USSR. See Paragraph 16, *ibid.* It should be noted that the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR was abolished and its functions transferred to the Ministries of Internal Affairs of the Union Republics by a decree of Jan. 13, 1960. See *Sbornik zakonov SSSR i ukazov Presidiuma Verkhovnovo Soveta SSSR, 1938-1961* (Collection of Laws of the USSR and Decrees of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR 1938-61), hereafter cited as *Sbornik zakonov, 1938-61*, Moscow, Izd-vo Izvestia Sovetov Deputatov Trudiashchikhsia SSR, 1961, p. 138.

[12] Roger Vaughan Bevan, "Moscow is a City of Many Moods," *Christian Science Monitor*, Oct. 5, 1962.

[13] E. Shevelev, "Present from Mr. Edwards," *Izvestia*, Dec. 19, 1963. Translated in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Jan. 15, 1964, p. 32.

[14] Mikhail A. Klochko, "No, the USSR is not a Scientist's Paradise," *Réalités* (French edition), September 1962, p. 75.

[15] William D. Patterson, "500,000 Potential Visitors to U.S.A.," *The Travel Agent*, Sept. 10, 1961, p. 38.

[16] See report of a discussion among Soviet citizens on this subject. Markoosha Fischer, *Reunion in Moscow*, Harper & Row, New York and Evanston, 1962, pp. 182-84.

[17] Klochko, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

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Soviet tourist travel in 1960 was within the bloc.[18]

Soviet tourists are carefully selected and briefed, and they must promise to obey certain rules while abroad, one of which is to refrain from talking alone with foreigners.[19] Despite the briefings and promises, Soviet control does not end with departure from the USSR. The tourist group is invariably accompanied by and under the surveillance of a member of the KGB.[20] In order to conceal the identity of the KGB member as much as possible, the help of one or more members of the tourist group may be needed. As happened in Klochko's case, a promise of cooperation may be exacted before the exit visa is granted.[21] Surveillance serves various purposes ranging from the extreme of preventing defections to the more routine aim of discouraging the tourist from unrestrained contacts with foreign nationals which might cause him to question the images painted by Soviet propaganda.[22]

Emigration

If it is difficult for the Soviet citizen to get permission to travel outside the USSR on trips of limited duration, it is even less likely that he will be allowed to emigrate to another country. While no general right of emigration exists in the Soviet Union today, in practice some persons have been able to emigrate legally. Repatriates appear to be the largest single group who have been allowed to leave. Repatriation may occur as the result of a right established by an agreement to which the Soviet Union is a party, such as the 1957 Polish-Soviet treaty.[23] In the absence of such an agreement, persons of foreign extraction residing in the USSR cannot expect that permission to emigrate will be easily obtained.

[18] Report of US Travel Mission to USSR, *loc. cit.*, p. 15.

[19] See description of the booklet, *Rules of Behavior of Soviet Citizens Abroad*, in Aleksandr Kaznacheiev, *Inside a Soviet Embassy*, Philadelphia and New York, Lippincott, 1962, p. 15.

[20] See Peter Deriabin and Frank Gibney, *The Secret World*, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 1959, pp. 185-86; Klochko, *op. cit.*, p. 75; Viktor Nekrasov, "On Both Sides of the Ocean," *Novyi mir*, December 1962, pp. 112-13.

[21] Klochko, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 73.

[23] An agreement briefly in force in 1957-58, allowing Poles who had been evacuated to the USSR between 1939 and 1944, as well as their spouses and children, to resettle in Poland. Text of treaty reproduced in *United Nations Treaty Series*, Vol. 281, pp. 121-31.

UNDERCOVER MAN

One fine day I was called on the telephone by an official of the first bureau. (In each Russian scientific institute there is a bureau in charge of secret matters: it is called the "first" bureau to avoid using the word "secret.") He told me that a man would come to see me the following day, without saying who or why—but I had learned in Russia that it is better at certain times not to ask questions.

The next day the man came at the appointed hour. His name was Vsevolod Vladimirovich Olenev and I had never seen him before.

"I have heard that you want to go to Canada," he said, fixing me with a penetrating look.

"That's right."

"I want to ask you some questions."

"Please do."

Right away I had grasped that Olenev was from the KGB and had come to check out the information furnished in the questionnaires that I had filled out. He interrogated me about my difficulties during the 1930's, when I had been expelled from the party. I explained to him that the accusations made against me had been completely without foundation.

"I think you have a chance to go to Canada." I adopted an air of interest, and he continued:

"I believe that in turn you could help me."

"What could I do for you?"

"It's obvious that I am not a scholar, but I too intend to join the tour. I'm afraid of one thing, though. Suppose that in the course of a visit to a laboratory or at a meeting of scholars, someone asks me: 'Mr. Olenev, what is your specialty?' What am I going to answer? That's why I need your help."

"In what way?"

"I could pass myself off as your assistant. Then if anyone asks a question, you could answer that I don't speak English but that I work with you."

"With pleasure, Vsevold Vladimirovich," I answered immediately.

Olenev told me that the final decision would be taken the same evening by the party Central Committee. The next day he came back again:

"Mikhail Antonovich," he told me, "You have authorization to go to Canada."

—From Mikhail A. Klochki, "No, the USSR Is Not a Scientist's Paradise," Réalités (French edition), September 1962, p. 75.

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In some instances criteria appear to be established which allow certain categories of persons, such as those having close relatives abroad, to leave. For instance, some members of the American-Armenian community in Erivan were granted exit visas for the first time in 1963 after submitting written invitations from a father, mother, sister or brother in the United States. These invitations had to be notarized by the Soviet Embassy in Washington, and submitted in both English and Russian.[24]

Should the USSR deny the requested exit visa, the repatriate may attempt to appeal for help directly to the foreign embassy concerned. This may prove difficult. Soviet citizens must show identification cards to members of the Soviet militia who guard foreign embassies, and these guards may deny entry to persons seeking repatriation, even using physical force. In 1963 the West Germans protested to Soviet authorities that the extraterritorial status of their Moscow Embassy had been infringed by a member of the Soviet militia attempting to prevent a man seeking repatriation from entering the embassy.[25] Even foreigners attempting to enter their own embassies may be stopped if the militia mistake them for Soviet citizens.

In general it can be said that this procedure is a rather effective constraint preventing contact between embassy personnel and persons resident in the Soviet Union.

The elderly, particularly relatives of persons who have already left the Soviet Union, are also sometimes allowed to emigrate, although once again, departure is not encouraged. Mrs. Manya Davydova, age 77, was granted an exit visa only after Soviet officials tried to discourage her by telling her there was no food in the United States and that she would surely perish if she left the USSR.[26] Long delays are common, even when permission to leave is finally granted. Mrs. Ludvize Kameneulis, 85 years old, was allowed to leave Lithuania to join her granddaughter in California (US) only after eight years of effort.[27] Those who are denied exit visas occasionally send direct appeals to Premier Khrushchev or his wife. Certain members of the American-Armenian community in Erivan have taken this step.[28] In at least one case such an appeal has brought a personal answer—and the requested visa. Mrs. Yekaterina Aron Frese, age 62, applied to emigrate to Canada three and a half years before arriving Vancouver. Eventually she sent her request to Mrs. Khrushchev. Shortly thereafter her departure was authorized.[29]

It is sometimes assumed that marriage to a foreigner will automatically enable a Soviet citizen to leave the USSR, but such is not the case. Indeed, for some years after the end of World War II marriage between Soviet citizens and foreigners was illegal. This decree was repealed in 1954. Although such marriages are now permitted by law, the regime discourages them. A recent Soviet legal commentary, while stating that no legal obstacles exist, stresses the seriousness of such a step, particularly when the foreigner comes from a different social system.[30] Some foreigners have recorded the delays and social pressures they have experienced when seeking to marry Soviet citizens. While marriage to a foreigner may facilitate acquisition of an exit visa for the Soviet citizen who wished to leave the country, it in no way guarantees it.[31] After registration of the marriage with Soviet authorities each person retains his former citizenship.[32] The citizen of the USSR, like everyone on Soviet soil regardless of citizenship, must still have an exit visa before he may emigrate.[33]

If repatriates, the elderly, and persons married to foreigners sometimes succeed in their attempts to obtain exit visas, others who may

[24] Henry Tanner, "American-Armenians Who Left US for Soviet Yearn to Return," *The New York Times*, March 18, 1964. For the Soviet reaction to Tanner's article see T. Krmoyan, "We Have No Need for the American 'Paradise,'" *Izvestia*, April 1, 1964; excerpts translated in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, April 22, 1964, pp. 25-26.

[25] "Man Pursued into Moscow Embassy," *The Times* (London), Feb. 4, 1963.

[26] "Flight to Freedom, Family to End Here," *The Boston Sunday Herald*, Dec. 30, 1962; John P. Carberg, "Happy New Year, New Life," *The Boston Herald*, Dec. 31, 1962.

[27] "Actress gets Grandmother out of Soviet after 8 Years," *The New York Times*, Aug. 15, 1964.

[28] Tanner, *loc. cit.*

[29] "Mrs. Khrushchev Helps Soviet Woman Go to Canada," *The New York Times*, March 1, 1964.

[30] M. M. Boguslavski, A. A. Rubanov, *Pravovoe polozhenie inostrantsev v SSSR* (The Legal Status of Foreigners in the USSR), Moscow, IMO, 1962, p. 108.

[31] Lee Oswald, the assassin of President John F. Kennedy, mentioned delays encountered in marrying a Russian and getting exit visas. "Oswald Called It My 'Historic Diary'—and It Is," *Life*, July 10, 1964, p. 30.

[32] Article 8 of the RSFSR Code of Laws on Marriage, the Family and Guardianship: *Kodeks zakonov o brake, seme i opeke RSFSR*, Moscow, Gosudarstvennoe izd-vo yuridicheskoi literatury, 1961, p. 7.

[33] Bogatikov, D. I., *et al.*, *Osobo opasnye gosudarstvennye prestuplenia* (Especially Dangerous State Crimes), Moscow, Gosudarstvennoe izd-vo yuridicheskoi literatury, 1963, p. 86, specifies that the exist visa requirement applies alike to Soviet citizens, foreigners, and persons with no citizenship.

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view the situation as hopeless occasionally attempt more desperate means. Some may try to enter foreign embassies, hoping foreigners can help. For example, in 1963 a group of 32 Siberians traveled 2,000 miles to Moscow, forced their way past the Soviet guards and entered the US Embassy seeking American help to leave the USSR. Since the US government does not recognize the right of foreign missions within the United States to grant asylum to US citizens, Embassy officials refused the request of the Siberians and turned them over to representatives of the Soviet Foreign Office.[34]

Other Soviet citizens may simply run the border. Some may try it from the air,[35] others on foot. Those who attempt to cross the frontier illegally and fail can expect no mercy. *Izvestia* has published the lengthy story of an 18-year-old boy whose parents were both Communist Party members but who was caught at night on the border trying to reach the West. The report ended by saying: "He betrayed his parents and his comrades. Now he must answer to Soviet justice." [36] Soviet legislation has a multitude of provisions providing penalties for actions of this kind. Persons who are not permanent residents of zones bordering on the Soviet frontier may not enter such areas without permission of the militia.[37] While the first violation of this rule apparently results in the imposition of an administrative sanction, subsequent violation is punishable with a term of up to six months' deprivation of freedom or a fine.[38] Once the person seeking to leave the USSR approaches and crosses the border proper, any one of three provisions may apply. He may be prosecuted for unlawful departure abroad, or for high treason. Or in the event that he has attempted to leave the country by plane, he may be charged with violation of the rules of international flight.[39] While the laws governing illegal departure or violation of the rules of flight provide penalties involving deprivation of freedom, treason can be punished by death. The crime of high treason is defined to include "fleeing abroad or refusing to return from abroad." [40]

Which of these three articles is applied in a particular case apparently depends upon a determination of whether or not the person seeking to leave was doing so with anti-Soviet intent. According to one Soviet commentary, if a citizen leaves the USSR illegally in order to engage in smuggling abroad or to escape responsibility for a crime committed earlier, or in an attempt to join relatives living on foreign soil, his act probably will not constitute high treason. Departure for the People's Democracies also will be viewed generally as outside the definition of treason. The lesser penalties of the legislation forbidding illegal departures or governing violation of flight rules probably will be applied instead. However, in the case of the flight of a Soviet citizen to the territory of a capitalist state, the commentary points to the possibility that the citizen may cause harm to the interests of the USSR. Should his actions show he risked inflicting such harm, he may be considered to have committed treason. Leaving the USSR for the People's Democracies may also be considered treason if it was just the first stage of a journey to the territory of a capitalist state.[41]

The Non-Tourist Traveler

Intourist statistics for 1960 show that in that year almost five times as many Soviet citizens traveled abroad for business purposes as for pleasure. In no instance did the Soviet Union send more tourists to a country than business travelers. In the other direction, the USSR received more business visitors than tourists from all countries except three: the United States, the German Democratic Republic, and Czechoslovakia. Only in the case of the US, however, is there a large difference in the respective figures.[42] Intourist's category of "business visitors" includes participants in sports events; persons on religious missions; delegations of

[34] "Siberians, Rejected by US, Are Sent Home by Russians," *The Evening Star* (Washington, D. C.), Jan. 4, 1963.

[35] See, for example, Theodore Shabad, "Soviet Dooms Two Armenians for Trying to Hijack a Plane," *The New York Times*, June 11, 1962, for a report based on an article in *Komsomolskaia pravda*.

[36] N. Dolenko, "Downhill," *Izvestia*, Feb. 6, 1963. Translated in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, March 6, 1963, pp. 32-33.

[37] Article 10, Statute on the Protection of the State Border of the USSR, *Sbornik zakonov, 1938-1961*, p. 372.

[38] Article 197, Criminal Code of the RSFSR, *Ugolovnoe zakonodatelstvo Soiuza SSSR i Soiuznykh Respublik*, V. I., Moscow, Gosudarstvennoe izd-vo yuridicheskoi literatury, 1963, p. 136.

[39] See Articles 11 and 27, Statute on the Protection of the State Border of the USSR, *loc. cit.*; also Articles 1, 20, and 21, Law on Criminal Responsibility for State Crimes, *Sbornik zakonov 1938-61*, pp. 749-55.

[40] See Article 1, Law on Criminal Responsibility for State Crimes, *loc. cit.*

[41] Menshagin and Kurinov, *Nauchno-prakticheskii kommentarii k zakonu ob ugolovnoi otvetstvennosti za gosudarstvennye prestupleniia* (A Theoretical and Practical Commentary on the Law of Criminal Responsibility for State Crimes), Moscow, 2nd revised edition, 1961, pp. 15-16.

[42] Report of US Travel Mission, *loc. cit.*, pp. 29-30.

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travelers of some importance in various professions; citizens traveling under cultural exchange agreements, such as students, exhibit guides, performers and professors; and groups seeking to promote trade.

While the controls on the selection and surveillance of Soviet tourists are uniformly stringent, the treatment of those traveling under other auspices is more varied. These variations depend in part on the nature of the trip and its length. Athletes participating in sports events spend only a short period of time in the foreign country. Their selection must be based primarily on athletic prowess. Security precautions are thus concentrated on strict supervision of their spare time while abroad. Travelers who are to be abroad for longer periods of time in closer contact with local populations are in a different situation. Here security considerations have much more influence in the selection process. In recent times the Soviet press has published articles which demonstrate that foreign travel may be denied if the would-be travelers are not considered politically mature. After Yevgenii Yevtushenko published his *Precocious Autobiography* in France, demands were made at a writers' conference that the privilege of foreign travel be withheld from nonconformist writers.[43] Shortly thereafter, Yevtushenko cancelled a trip he had planned to Princeton University in the United States. The official reason for cancellation of the trip was illness.[44] Perhaps for similar reasons, it is not uncommon for Soviet citizens to find that they must cancel travel plans on little notice.

Travelers who return and give a report that varies from the official position may expect to suffer unfortunate consequences. Viktor Nekrasov was subjected to pressure and vilification as a result of publication of the report of his trip to the United States. By finding certain aspects of American life admirable, Nekrasov demonstrated that he had forgotten that peaceful coexistence, a doctrine governing political relations among states, is not a doctrine which may be applied to conflicts of ideology.[45]

Things are not very different when the situation is reversed. While foreigners on business trips in the Soviet Union are seldom molested, the situation may be more grave for Soviet citizens who associate with them. Students may be told not to attend lectures given by foreign exchange professors using materials which would otherwise not be available to them. Professor Harold J. Berman of Harvard Law School found it necessary to discontinue his lecture series at Moscow University after attendance dropped suddenly from 200 to 5 students. This mass drop-out occurred after Professor Berman had distributed Russian translations of the US Supreme Court's 1954 opinion outlawing "separate but equal" school facilities for Negro Americans and its 1960 decision reviewing a section of the 1950 Subversive Activities Control Act requiring "Communist Action Organs" to register with the Justice Department. The students were apparently warned by Komsomol officers to boycott Professor Berman's classes.[46]

The Soviet government sometimes tells its citizens that foreign business groups are out to serve intelligence purposes. Soon after a US communications exhibit opened in the USSR, *Izvestia* warned its readers to beware of Western intelligence tricks at foreign exhibitions. The same article suggested—two years after the event—that when Benny Goodman's band toured the Soviet Union in 1962, four of its musicians were really secret agents.[47]

Goodman's tour was not in fact free of incidents. One Soviet citizen was arrested and another was chased by police after they had accepted copies of a book listing Goodman's recordings.[48] The rationale for this police action probably was that the Soviet government had not inspected and given advance approval for importation of the specific books in question. Thus even the acceptance of token gifts from foreigners may result in problems for the Soviet citizen.

The Visitor to the USSR

If it is difficult for Soviet citizens to travel outside the Soviet bloc, it is quite easy for most foreigners to obtain visas to visit the USSR. Reports of tourists on their contacts with Russians vary. Some feel that they have had free contact with their Soviet counterparts while others say this is not the case. Despite the lack of consensus, certain things are clear.

The foreign tourist in the USSR is not completely free to choose where he wishes to go,

[43] "Travel Curbs Urged for Soviet Writers," *The New York Times*, April 3, 1963, summarizes an article in *Literaturnaia gazeta*.

[44] Theodore Shabad in *The New York Times*, April 13, 1963; editorial, *ibid.*, April 15, 1963.

[45] See Priscilla Johnson, "The Regime and the Intellectuals—A Window on Party Politics," *Problems of Communism* (special supplement), July-August 1963, p. xxiii.

[46] Theodore Shabad in *The New York Times*, April 14, 1962.

[47] *The New York Times*, August 7, 1964.

[48] *Ibid.*, June 7, 1962.

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or how he will get there. Foreigners do not receive one visa which is good for the entire country, but rather separate visas for individual cities. Since 1941, certain Soviet regions and cities have been permanently closed to foreigners, although an occasional exception may be made. These closed areas constitute over 25 percent of the territory of the USSR. Since other places are also often "temporarily" closed in practice, the percentage is considerably higher.[49] The mode of transportation which the foreign visitor selects is also of interest to Soviet authorities. Soviet policy appears ambivalent about automobile travel by unaccompanied foreigners within its borders. Such travel was abruptly halted in 1962, although no official policy statement was issued.[50] By May of 1964, at least some foreign car drivers had gotten into the USSR, although, once again, no formal announcement was made of the change.[51] The effect of these restrictions is to deprive foreigners from seeing many parts of the Soviet Union and also to prevent persons living in the areas from any contact with foreigners.

The Soviet government controls not only where visitors may go, but how long they may remain. It is rare for tourists to be allowed to stay more than five days in any one city, although longer periods are occasionally permitted in Moscow, Leningrad, and the Black Sea resorts.[52] Five days is long enough to sightsee. It is rather short if the visitor's intention is to get well acquainted with the persons he may chance to meet.

Whether tourists travel individually or on a group basis, the Soviet Union emphasizes scheduled sightseeing under the direction of Intourist guides. Opportunities to meet Soviet citizens other than those selected by the guide are rare. Intourist guides may specifically discourage such contact. Instructions of one Intourist guide to American women touring in Georgia included the admonition that they not go out on their own in Tbilisi. The reason given for this advice was that Georgian men were "too romantic."[53] Other factors also work toward isolation of the tourist. Foreign visitors are housed and fed in Intourist hotels where Soviet citizens rarely stay. The tourist who wishes to mingle with ordinary citizens under most circumstances must forego his prepaid meals, dismiss guides, and forge ahead on his own. Only if he does this is there a real opportunity to have contact with Soviet citizens who have not been pre-selected to mirror the image of the USSR which the Soviet government wishes to impart.[54]

Yet if the foreign visitor is really willing to make the effort, he will not find it impossible to get acquainted with Soviet citizens, particularly if he has some knowledge of the Russian language. His main problem is that the people willing to risk contact with him are not necessarily representative of the population at large: Thus a "pre-selection process" of a different sort occurs.

The average citizen cannot help but be affected by articles in the Soviet press stressing the dangers of association with foreigners. While some reports refer to tourists of specific nationality, others are of a more general nature. Soviet citizens of Jewish nationality have been denounced for their contacts with foreigners, including Israeli Embassy personnel.[55] *Komsomolskaia pravda* published an article about a Russian girl who was purportedly sold into a harem after marrying a Moslem student—a tale which African students felt certain was intended as a warning to Russian girls not to associate with them.[56]

125 YEARS AGO

In Russia secrecy presides over everything: secrecy—administrative, political, social; discretion—useful and useless; silence—superfluous for assuring necessary security; such are the inevitable consequences of the primitive character of this people, corroborated by the influence of its government. Every traveler is indiscreet; so it is necessary, as politely as possible, to keep track of the always too inquisitive foreigner lest he see things as they are—which would be the greatest of inconveniences.

—From The Journals of the Marquis de Custine; Journey For Our Time (La Russie en 1839), *Phyllis Penn Kohler, ed., New York, Pellegrini and Cudahy, 1951, p. 190.*

[49] US Department of State Press Release No. 579, Nov. 12, 1963; also Frederick C. Barghoorn, *The Soviet Cultural Offensive*, Princeton, N. J., Princeton University Press, 1960, pp. 108-12.

[50] *Le Monde* (Paris), June 29, 1963.

[51] Theodore Shabad in *The New York Times*, Dec. 29, 1963; "Two US Women Startle Soviet by 1,500 Mile Trip in 'Camper,'" *ibid.*, June 5, 1964.

[52] Governmental Affairs Institute, Information Center for American Travelers to the Soviet Union, *Report on Individual Questionnaires*, 1963, p. 2.

[53] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[54] See Barghoorn, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-15.

[55] "Three Jews Assailed by Soviet Paper," *The New York Times*, June 10, 1963, summarizing an article published in *Trud*.

[56] Seymour Topping, "Africans Complain of Bias in Moscow," *The New York Times*, June 4, 1963.

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Readers of the Soviet press are told that foreign visitors may be "ideological saboteurs" if not indeed spies. They are warned to beware of Western tourists bearing propaganda.[57] One article published in 1963 singled out tourists from the United States and Israel for special mention as ideological saboteurs acting under the direction of intelligence services.[58] Case histories are related showing how contact with foreigners can gradually lead the Soviet citizen to engage in anti-Soviet propaganda, punishable by deprivation of freedom.[59] Publications sometimes warn of the ultimate danger—that foreign tourists may in fact be espionage agents.[60] During summer, the peak of the tourist traffic, a sufficient number of items of this sort are published to indicate a deliberate campaign against contacts with foreigners.

Warnings are not restricted to the written word. Militia and hotel authorities may physically interfere with Soviet citizens seeking contact with foreigners. Interference of this nature has impeded the development of contacts at meetings like the Moscow Youth Festival, as well as between citizens and individual travelers.[61] Such constraints frequently lead the Soviet participant to cut off all contact with the foreign tourist, in a sudden way.[62] Those who continue the association may nevertheless exhibit fear. This fear may be general or quite specific—fear of surveillance by Soviet authorities; fear of neighbors' learning of the friendship; fear of reprisals such as arrest, loss of a job, or expulsion from a university.[63]

One effect of these pressures is clear. The brave, the foolish, the young and the old are represented out of proportion to their numbers among those Soviet citizens who willingly associate with foreigners without government sanction. It is not very common for a tourist to get to know Soviet citizens of middle years with family responsibilities unless these people feel themselves to be either very safe from reprisals (due to elite status or position within the party) or so low in status as to think there is little to be lost. So long as persons who may wish to associate with foreigners hesitate to do so, the Iron Curtain, even with its cracks, remains.

Exchange Agreements

If personal contacts between Soviet citizens and foreigners are still beset by obstacles, it seems clear that these impediments may have implications for the implementation of exchange programs.

Although Soviet statements on exchanges are usually restricted to a recitation of the goals enumerated in the treaties (or, on the adverse side, to allegations that Westerners use cultural exchanges to interfere in the domestic affairs of the USSR[64]), occasionally they say more. S. Romanovski, Chairman of the State Committee of the USSR Council of Ministers on Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, recently summarized party directives pertaining to relations with foreign countries: while not forgetting to mention the goals of peace and friendship among peoples, Romanovski also stated that the political effectiveness of cultural ties should be increased in order to serve the cause of the construction of communism in the Soviet Union.[65]

Participation in exchange programs puts Soviet officials in a somewhat difficult situation. On the one hand, they must live up to the terms of agreements to which the USSR is a party. On the other hand, they must obey party directives, one of which is that there can be no "peaceful coexistence of ideologies."[66] The officials must find it hard to know exactly when promoting exchange programs becomes synonymous with abetting the peaceful coexistence of ideologies.

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[57] "Muscovites Warned on Tourist Contacts," *ibid.*, June 29, 1963, discusses an article published in the June 28th issue of *Moskovskaia pravda.*

[58] Ye. Ivanov, "Soul Hunters," *Trud*, Aug. 21, 1963.

[59] V. Shumilov, "Poisonous Seeds," *Izvestia*, Aug. 28, 1963, cites cases of Soviet citizens found guilty of "anti-Soviet propaganda" because they listened to "imperialist propaganda" and associated with foreigners. Article 7 of the Law on State Crimes, *loc cit.*, states that "Anti-Soviet agitation or propaganda" is punishable by "deprivation of freedom for a term of six months to seven years" or "exile for a term of two to five years," or both.

[60] See for example B. A. Viktorov, *Shpiony pod maskoi turistov* [Spies Disguised as Tourists], Voennoe izd-vo ministerstva oborony SSSR, Moscow, 1963; this book must have been intended for mass consumption, since 200,000 copies were printed. Sometimes there is merely a suggestion that the tourist may be involved in intelligence activities. See for example Ye. Olin, "Strange Strolls of an American Tourist," *Izvestia*, April 24, 1964. Translated in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, May 20, 1964, pp. 32-33.

[61] See Barghoorn, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-42; also Laurens Van der Post, *A View of All the Russias*, New York, Wm. Morrow & Co., 1964, pp. 29, 286.

[62] Van der Post, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-68; Barghoorn, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

[63] See M. Fischer, *op. cit.*, p. 48; Van der Post, *op. cit.*, p. 46; Barghoorn, *op. cit.*, pp. 85, 95, 103.

[64] See, for example, G. Zhukov, "Two Approaches Towards Cultural Contacts," *International Affairs*, November 1959, pp. 19-27.

[65] S. Romanovski, "For a Deeper Knowledge and Better Understanding of One Another," *Izvestia*, April 28, 1964.

[66] *Ibid.*

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They cannot be expected to do more than adhere to the minimal, blackletter requirements of the agreements, since compliance with the spirit of the treaties may come too close to ideological coexistence for safety. In view of these considerations it is understandable that the Soviet Union should be most interested in those facets of exchange programs which can clearly be justified as helpful "to the construction of communism in the USSR." Programs which allow the Soviet Union to acquire the technical expertise it still lacks in certain areas are welcome; projects which seem designed to bring large numbers of Soviet citizens into contact with what is considered to be foreign propaganda are suspect. Examples are not hard to find. If the USSR must allow foreign exhibits on its soil, it is under no obligation to encourage the attendance of its people. Difficulties encountered in implementing sections of the treaties dealing with exhibits may revolve around such questions as whether the Soviet government will allow advertisement of the exhibits in the press, on radio or television; whether posters will be permitted in public places; and so on.

The difficulties in implementation created by the Soviet Union's continuing passion for secrecy and control have led the US Government to establish a policy of reciprocity.[67] To circumvent it, the Soviet government has in the past few years attempted to establish direct relations between private organizations in the United States and so-called "public organizations" in the USSR. To maintain that there are any organizations in the Soviet Union that are independent of the Communist Party—that is, of the Soviet government—is, of course, to strain credulity; indeed, such a phenomenon is ruled out by the Soviet Constitution itself. This is well understood in the United States, and accordingly the latest Soviet attempts have not made much headway. Thus "reciprocity" continues to reign.

To sum up, any overall evaluation of the present state of contacts between Soviet citizens and foreigners must invite certain obvious conclusions. First, there is no doubting that the Soviet regime has decisively retreated from the paranoid policy of the Stalin era which insisted on the total isolation of the Soviet population from the outside world. In comparison with a situation where contacts were nil, the present volume of travel to and from the Soviet Union must be considered an enormous stride forward. At the same time, it is equally clear that nothing close to a genuine interflow of contacts has been established. The Soviet regime's continuing resort to methods of control, selection, surveillance and propaganda to prohibit—or at the least severely inhibit—personal association between its subjects and the citizens of other countries bespeaks a deeply-rooted fear of the impact that free communication would have on the Soviet people's comparative image of the USSR and other societies. While it is hard to conceive of a reversion to Stalinist attitudes, it is also hard to see how the present regime could countenance a true breakdown of the Iron Curtain without inviting a serious and certain challenge to the claims on which its power rests.

[67] For a discussion of this policy, see Stephen S. Rosenfeld, "Soviet-American Exchanges—Tit-for-Tat Goodwill," *Science*, March 27, 1964, pp. 1413-17.

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Figures Unfit to Print

By Leon M. Herman

The practice of secrecy in the Soviet Union permeates all spheres of activity subject to the control of the political authorities. Economic activity is, of course, no exception. The humble worker in the vineyard of Soviet economic research cannot help stumbling upon a seemingly endless array of obstacles to the simple task of gathering routine factual information on the performance of the economy. These obstacles take the form of omissions, evasions, shadowy generalizations, and "approximate" figures. Most of them relate to routine social phenomena that have no bearing on the military-strategic interests of the state. It is understandable, therefore, that the researcher feels the need to explore the motives that guide the Soviet authorities in their addiction to secrecy.

The Early Liberal Attitude

The Bolshevik leaders did not emerge from the civil war with an incurable penchant for secrecy; in the economic sphere in particular they were unmitigated optimists. They were primarily concerned with bringing about the economic miracle which they assumed would follow the abolition of private ownership of the means of production. This is demonstrated by the wealth of systematic, candid economic information carried in the annual volumes of the "Control Figures," published during the period from 1925 to 1930. Similar evidence is found in the three-volume text of the First Five-Year Plan.[1]

Before the 1930's the leaders of the Soviet Union were, in fact, as aggressive in challenging the West with their championship of the free flow of economic information as they were in every other area of official encounter. They argued at that time that only profit-hungry private entrepreneurs could possibly benefit from the suppression of economic information of vital interest to the public. The leaders of the proletarian state, on the contrary, had no secrets to keep from their own workers.

In the late 1920's, for example, it was customary in official Soviet circles to speak of "the higher standards of Soviet statistics," which unlike capitalist statistics "cannot . . . limit themselves to gliding along the surface." [2] Even a decade later, after the clouds of secrecy had already settled upon many areas of Soviet economic life, a prominent official economist who

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[1] The steady trend toward the obfuscation of factual detail may be illustrated by comparing the sizes of the first, second and third five-year plans:

Gosudarstvennaia Planovaia Komissiia, *Piatiletnyi plan narodnokhoziaistvennovo stroitelstva SSSR* (Five-year Plan for National Economic Construction in the USSR), 3d ed. Moscow, Planovoe Khoziaistvo, 1930; 3 vols. in 4 (486, 418, 606 and 72 pp.). This was the plan for the years 1928-32.

Gosudarstvennaia Planovaia Komissiia, *Vtoroi piatiletnyi plan razvitiia narodnovo khoziaistva SSSR*, 1933-1937 gg. (Second Five-Year Plan for the Development of the Economy of the USSR, 1933-1937), Moscow, Partizdat, 1934, 2 vol. (Vol. I—686 pp.; Vol. II—582 pp.).

Gosudarstvennaia planovaia komissiia, *Tretii piatiletnyi plan razvitiia narodnovo khoziaistva SSSR*, 1938-1942 gg. (Third Five-Year Plan for the Development of the Economy of the USSR, 1938-1942), Moscow, Gosplanizdat, 1939, 240 pp.

[2] *Statisticheskii spravochnik 1928*, Moscow, 1929, p. 3.

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compiled a collection of comparative international statistics complained of the "extreme difficulties" he encountered in locating usable capitalist statistics:

These difficulties stem primarily from the fact that capitalist statistics falsify a number of data. Most of all, the capitalist countries falsify data on the material conditions of the toilers. By dint of the apologist nature of bourgeois statistics, a whole range of the most important economic indicators are reported in the form of data of a doubly relative character (i.e., *percentage changes of index numbers*).[3]

But by the early 1930's Soviet leaders began to show an awareness that the working of economic miracles was proving to be a more difficult job than they had foreseen, that it required not only a large, sustained outlay in economic resources and in time, but also a great deal of hard, purposeful work. Little by little, therefore, some of the official illusions in the economic sphere began to evaporate. The slogans based on the theme of "building socialism" in five years would not in fact build the industrial castles without the full payment of the cost in time and resources. Even in an uncompromisingly socialist state, it turned out, the resources that are converted into savings and then plowed back into the economy in the shape of new plants and new equipment cannot be used simultaneously for current consumption. Social saving, as the political leaders were warned by their more outspoken economic experts during the "industrialization debate" of the middle 1920's, is by its very nature and under any economic system in direct conflict with current consumption. A high rate of growth can be achieved only by a high rate of saving, and the latter is obtainable only by a high rate of withholding from consumption.

The economy, in short, gave no sign of yielding to the barrage of official pronouncements of a new social order and a new spirit in the land. Yet the Bolshevik rulers had no intention of dispensing with the atmosphere of exhilaration they had worked so hard to create. Popular hope was too important an ingredient of their working political capital. They chose therefore not to deal with economic reality, but to hide the disturbing facts from the public.

The practice of withholding economic information became systematic in the USSR during the early years of the industrial speed-up in the cities and the drive for forced collectivization in the villages. By the beginning of the 1930's, the blackout was quite extensive. The very process of diffusion of secrecy from one area to another during the decade offers some highly useful clues to the basic motivation behind it. It is remarkable, for example, that the first indicators to be suppressed were those relating to the living standards of the population, directly or by implication, whereas it was not until the latter years of the decade that the curtain of secrecy began to fall on the indicators measuring performance in the highly strategic areas of economic activity.

The Coming of Selective Suppression

A few examples will help to illustrate the order of priorities in the suppression of economic data in the Soviet Union.

A) By an ironic coincidence, the onslaught on "undesirable" facts began in 1927, the year that marked the first decade of Soviet rule. It was then that the Soviet government discontinued the release of statistics concerning public health. This step was taken shortly after the trade-union press reported that the rate of industrial accidents increased alarmingly as a result of higher work norms imposed on newly recruited, inexperienced workers.

B) Between 1927 and 1932 the practice of suppression spread to at least six series of welfare-related statistical data which had been published regularly until that time. These were: the cost-of-living index; real wages of industrial workers (nominal wages adjusted for price inflation); family budget sampling; number of homes completed; food consumption of the rural population; and prices of agricultural products, expressed in terms of industrial prices ("terms of trade" for the village).

C) In 1931, the Soviet government discontinued the publication of annual figures on the nation's vital statistics. It must be assumed that, if left unsuppressed, this data would have brought into the open the damaging effect of collectivization on the birth and mortality rates in the villages. In this way, the regime cut itself loose from any obligation to release information on the unpredictable development of social welfare during a period of heavy investment in industrial growth.

It was not, however, until the second half of the decade that the policy of silence began to affect statistics that could be classified as having military and strategic significance. For example, annual production figures for such sensitive items as gold, uranium, tungsten, and ball-bearings were reported regularly several

[3] Ia. I. Yoffe, ed., *SSSR i kapitalisticheskie strany*, Moscow, 1939, p. XIII.

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years after the blackout of major welfare indicators. This came to an end in 1937. Publication of information on the production of synthetic rubber, platinum, lubricating oil, and potash (extracted from an ore that also contains magnesium) had already ceased a year earlier. On the other hand, aluminum, silver, and gasoline output continued to be reported until 1938. In short, the creeping fog of secrecy that has come to conceal the economic landscape of the USSR has its own distinctive, recognizable source. It can be traced to a policy decision, taken in secret some time in the late 1920's, to exclude the kind of information that might alert the Russian people to the fact that their rulers were building up the strategic, economic power of the state at the expense of the welfare of the citizens. The first objective of the campaign of secrecy was to dry up the sources of information that might help the public to discern the direction of the regime's economic policy. The more "legitimate" aim, the confounding of the potential outside enemy, seems to have come along later, as an expedient afterthought.

It is significant in this context that the earliest known "secret" document in Soviet economic literature is the report known as "The National Economic Plan of the USSR for the Year 1931." This report appears to have been originally designed to continue the series of annual economic forecasts known as the "Control Figures," published since 1925 by the economic research staff of Gosplan. As it turned out, however, it was branded as *"ne podlezhit oglasheniu"* (not subject to publication) and suppressed.[4] Instead, selected portions of the report were fed into a speech delivered by V. V. Kuibyshev, the chief of Gosplan, to a party conference in December 1930.[5]

For the purpose of the present discussion, it is unnecessary to dwell upon a detailed comparison of the original, suppressed text with the data finally released to the public. Yet, at least one aspect of this early experiment in the suppression of completed reports may be worthy of consideration here. The regime by this time had become anxious to break the continuity of releasing objective economic reports for public discussion. Hitherto, an economic report had been considered a neutral document and any qualified agency could publish economic facts and forecasts—the more expert the agency in economic analysis, the better. By the middle of the First Five-Year Plan, however, the picture had changed. Economics had become too serious a business to be left to the economists. The specialists were, among other things, tradition-bound; they suffered, for example, from an occupational habit of setting up in advance a firm analytical framework, in the form of a series of rubrics under which the annual data measuring national economic performance could be systematically examined. This was a habit that had to be broken. Thus, for example, the rubric "New Housing," which used to appear regularly in the volumes of "Control Figures," was included in the unpublished 1931 volume, but it was not mentioned in Kuibyshev's summary of the report's contents. Why not? A clue may be found in the following passage from the suppressed report:

In spite of the investment of over 1.5 billion rubles in new housing construction in the socialized sector during the past three years, the workers in a number of industrial districts and urban centers still live under extremely unsatisfactory housing conditions. (*p. 76*)

After 1931, open discussion of the year's economic disappointments, along with its suc-

A CENSOR'S SLIP

There is in Soviet economic research the familiar phenomenon of "escaped" evidence which occasionally finds its way into public print when the screening process fails. One example of this kind of datum will help to illustrate the variety. An early, and only partly screened, summary of the official text of the Seven-Year Plan (1959-65), issued by Tass on November 14, 1958, carried *(mirabile dictu!)* an absolute figure for the average wage targeted for 1965—990 rubles per month. Taken together with the published figure of a planned 26 percent increase by the same date, it was possible to compute the average wage in effect in 1958, namely 785 rubles (78.5 current rubles). This particular "fugitive" figure was reported by the present author in *Problems of Communism,* No. 2, 1959, p. 14.

The hard ruble figure did not appear in any subsequent published version of the Seven-Year Plan.

L. H.

[4] Gosudarstvennaia Planovaia Komissiia, *Narodnokhoziaistvennyi plan SSSR na 1931 g.* (National Economic Plan of the USSR for 1931), Moscow, Izd-vo Gosplana, 1931, 287 pp. Only 1,200 copies of this report were printed, marked "not for public distribution."

[5] *Planovoe khoziaistvo* (Moscow), No. 12, 1930; *Pravda,* January 11, 1931.

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cesses, was discarded as being out of keeping with the spirit of a society engaged in changing the world. Thenceforth, every official economic report had to be prepared according to a tested formula, with the minimum of factual ingredients required to make a stirring political impact.

The Political Management of Economic Facts

In sum, then, once the initial testing period was over, selective suppression of data became firmly established as official Soviet policy and practice. Since then, only the severity of application has fluctuated. During the late 1930's, under the double pressure of military preparation and economic austerity, suppression of economic information reached a high degree of intensity. In 1939, for instance, the government brought out a carefully screened collection of economic data, running to only 207 pages, as compared with the 692 pages of the official abstracts of statistics published in 1936.

The abbreviated 1939 collection was to be the last source of official information on the Soviet economy for a period of 17 years—a period encompassing World War II and the last eight years of Stalin's life. It took Stalin's successors another three years to decree the end of the drought. In June 1956, a modest volume of economic statistics, 262 pages in length, was published. Since then the government has been releasing annual abstracts of economic data measuring some 700-800 pages.

While the volume of published economic materials has grown since Stalin's death, the content continues to be strictly controlled—more strictly, in fact, than in 1936. Recent statistical abstracts have been padded with page after page of details on the geographical distribution of the output of such minor articles as gypsum, lime, brick, tiles and roofing slate. There is no mention of the national production of such critical commodities as asbestos, graphite, mica or industrial diamonds. Technical details on the number, size and technological process employed by the blast furnaces of the steel industry abound, but nowhere is there any suggestion of the existence of an industry producing nonferrous metals, copper, lead, zinc, aluminum and tin.[6] Furthermore, official source materials give no indication that the USSR is a major producer of merchant ships, fishing vessels, aircraft, helicopters, magnesium, cadmium, cobalt, tungsten, antimony, silver, gold, synthetic rubber, or uranium ore.

However, since these items belong to a category of information that has bearing on military security, it is not too surprising to find that data of this sort are missing from official sources; to this extent, Soviet practice does not differ widely from that of Western societies under wartime conditions. But what makes the Soviet system of economic secrecy unique is the fact that it is only periodically motivated by any high degree of preoccupation with military security. A number of indicators that bear directly upon external security (steel, petroleum, sulphuric acid) disappear occasionally only to reappear later. It seems, therefore, that the main purpose of blacking out large areas of economic information on a continuing basis is to protect the reputation of the ruling elite for infallibility. In pursuit of this objective the Soviet government finds it necessary to follow a devious route in providing information to its domestic public, and in doing so it has displayed a capacity for inventiveness that has been notably lacking on other "fronts" of official policy.

The Politics of a Good Grain Harvest

Soviet leaders feel that they must at all times present hard, incontrovertible evidence that they are always in full control of the economy. Grain production may serve as an example. Stalin had his own methods here: he adopted the use of the "scientific" concept of the expected annual "biological yield" of grain, for he found it preferable to work with the putative yield than with the actual, unpredictable grain crop as delivered by the farmers to the barns. With this use of the term "yield," which is nothing more than the final estimate of the grain stand made before harvest by official inspectors, Stalin was able to report a steady rise in the output of grain year by year following the "success" of collectivization in 1932. Here was *prima facie* evidence of the wisdom of the collectivization policy.

On the death of Stalin, the new leadership wanted to dissociate itself from the awkward legacy of unharvested grain stocks. This part of the record was therefore simply erased, and it was disclosed that the margin of exaggeration of the official grain figure, accumulated over two decades, was no less than 50 percent.

[6] *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR, statisticheskyi yezhegodnik* (The National Economy of the USSR; a Statistical Annual), Moscow, Gosstatizdat, 1958-1962.

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In 1952, real grain production amounted to only 80 million tons rather than the officially reported 120 million tons.[7]

But the policy of economic secrecy has not disappeared under the post-Stalin regime. Khrushchev, too, needed a record of success in grain production; in the Soviet Union of the 1960's, just as in the times of the Empress Catherine II two hundred years earlier, "one good harvest makes up for ten years of misrule." Thus the harvests reported under Krushchev also showed a buoyant, steady expansion from year to year,[8] until the bubble burst under the impact of the short harvest year of 1963. All at once, the country's granaries were revealed to be empty of wheat, with no trace of the massive wheat crops reported to have been gathered since 1956; the US Department of Agriculture has estimated that the discrepancy for the period 1956-62 amounts to 135.7 million metric tons.[9] And in order to clear the deck once again for a fresh start, the figure on the 1963 grain crop was suppressed altogether.

A Premature "Good Society"

But the shadows of secrecy still fall most heavily over social welfare data. Indeed, current Soviet reporting in this particularly sensitive area has returned to the practices of what might be called the "late middle" Stalin period, somewhere between 1936 and 1940.[10]

The public is kept in ignorance of a whole range of data that was freely discussed in print during the early 1930's. Nothing is now published, for example, about the distribution of employment by industry, or the structure of wages in the Soviet economy as a whole. It is possible to ascertain from odd fragments of information that the wage structure is highly differentiated and that the gaps between the various groups of wage-earners in industry is wider today in the USSR than in any other industrial society; but there is no access to specific data needed to carry out the exact measurement of these gaps. The last published source book on this subject (*Trud v SSSR*) appeared in 1936. Whenever scholars visiting in the USSR touch upon this topic, Soviet economic officials reply that no substantive volume on labor and wages can be expected for some time to come.

Contemporary Soviet society is marked by vast differences in income—a fact which undoubtedly provides the main explanation for the obscurantist policies of the regime. Lenin's settled vision of a society in which no one—not even the leading party cadres—would earn more than twice the wage of a skilled worker, has not materialized.[11] Thus a Minister of State earns ten to fifteen times as much as the average typist: 9,000 as against 600-900 rubles yearly. In the United States the comparable ratio is something like five to one. Nor would the gap be any narrower within, say, a large industrial plant. Here, the basic pay of the manager, net of bonuses, can amount to 7,200 rubles per annum, while the pay of an unskilled worker in the same plant would be, as prescribed by law, 480 rubles.

Similarly, little information is available on the distribution of individual and family incomes by size; the public knows almost nothing about how distant from one another in economic and social welfare are the richest and the poorest fifth of the Soviet population.

In the early days of the USSR much serious research was conducted by official economic agencies with the purpose of keeping a steady hand on the economic pulse of the country's family life. It was considered important to gather and disseminate information about the impact of economic growth and social change on the family. By means of a periodic budget survey, with the aid of modern sampling meth-

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[7] The two sets of yields for the preceding two years were juxtaposed by one authority as follows (in million metric tons):

Year	*Biological Yield*	*Barn Yield*	*% of overstatement*
1950	124.5	81.2	53
1951	121.3	79.7	52

N. Jasny, *Essays on the Soviet Economy*, New York, Praeger, 1961, p. 35.

[8] Soviet official sources report the following figures for the annual grain harvests since 1953, pointing to an 80 percent increase between 1953 and 1962 (in million metric tons): 1953—82.5; 1955—106.8; 1956—127.6; 1957—105.0; 1958—141.2; 1959—125.9; 1960—134.4; 1961—138.0; 1962—147.5.

[9] US Department of Agriculture, *The Eastern Europe Agricultural Situation*, ERS-Foreign 73, p. 11.

[10] Some light on current Soviet practices in the field of economic information may be shed by reference to a major publication of international economic statistics. A recent issue of the regular United Nations statistical report carries a total of 64 standard tabulations of economic indicators for the nations of the world. Among these, the USSR is included in only 21 tables. It is conspicuous by its absence from such basic categories as: wages in manufacturing, index of consumer prices, wholesale trade, money supply, public debt, international liquidity (gold reserve), non-ferrous metals, synthetic rubbers, civil aviation, sea-borne shipping, shipbuilding, and new industrial construction. United Nations, *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*, March 1964.

[11] In April 1917 Lenin went further: "[Government] officials [are] to be not only elected, but also subject to recall; their pay [is] not to exceed that of a skilled worker." "Political Parties and Tasks of the Proletariat (1917)," in V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VI, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1936, p. 78.

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ods, the Central Statistical Administration measured regularly such important phenomena as the size, composition, income, expenditures, consumption and work-time pattern of Soviet families. Specifically, for example, it furnished reliable information on the general standard of living. A regular survey of the incomes and expenditures of the urban wage-earning families provided a fairly accurate measure of the rise and fall in the economic welfare of this section of the population. (For the purpose of this survey, a number of families kept records of daily expenditures over the entire year. The sample consisted of some 600-700 families living in eight industrial regions who were periodically visited by investigators; the results were com-

Deciphering the Soviet World

How do Western economic scholars surmount the formidable obstacles presented by Soviet secretiveness?

To begin with, it is useful to remember that the penchant for secrecy and the tendency to boast, which color in equal degree Soviet information policy, are both products of a compulsive desire to impress all comers with the miraculous powers of the Soviet economic system. Soviet authorities are therefore always on the lookout for areas of domestic economic performance that can be reported more or less candidly and in terms of specific physical quantities. It need not be a secret, for example, in what branches of production the largest blocks of new capital investment are concentrated, and where, as a consequence, high rates of growth are maintained.

By using official statistics it is thus possible to aggregate the selected published production figures (affecting a range of industrial commodities only) into a usable index of industrial production for the USSR as a whole. This herculean task was carried out by Donald Hodgman in the early 1950's. In order to eliminate the known upward bias of the unexplained Soviet method of index building, he used as weights for his aggregation, the industrial wage bill of 1934. His meticulous recalculation resulted in a considerable deflation of the published official Soviet results, as shown herewith:[1]

Period	Official	Hodgman
1930-32	43	24
1933-36	95	79
1936-40	71	25

The student of Soviet economic reality must also be prepared to go out of his way in searching for data that might serve to verify official figures. One noted demographer, for example, had to search through the Soviet literature on obstetrics and gynecology in order to find the hard evidence he needed on the incidence of abortion in the USSR.[2]

The distinguished economist Naum Jasny reports that he discovered early in his career that students of Soviet economic affairs must "scan Soviet evidence much in the same manner as detectives operate." He writes:

I, for my part, have long and carefully studied the economy of the railways as an index of general economic development because the evidence on railways, mostly rather ample, seemed reliable. Total transports were indicative of total outputs; rising costs of transportation to the carrier reflected the rate of general inflation, and so on.

I paid particular attention to the technical literature devoted to output of building materials as a check on Soviet construction and investment claims. . . .

Textbooks on bookkeeping, and especially instructions to tax collectors, bank officials (banks are entrusted with considerable control functions in the USSR) and so on, frequently yield a catch, because such publications must tell their readers in unmistakable terms how to proceed in the fulfillment of their duties. If I had sufficient time, I would have scanned the provincial press for scraps of evidence deliberately withheld from Moscow papers.

Jasny concludes his discussion with the judgment that "Soviet statistics are an amalgam of falsified, distorted, misleading and correct statistics.[3]

L. H.

[1] Donald R. Hodgman, *Soviet Industrial Production*, 1938-51, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1954, p. 89.

[2] F. Lorimer, *The Population of the USSR*, Geneva, United Nations, 1946, p. 130.

[3] Naum Jasny, *Essays on the Soviet Economy*, New York, Praeger, 1962, pp. 15-17.

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puted and published quarterly.) The regular publication of the survey came to an abrupt end in the third quarter of 1928.[12]

Since then, all that has been published from time to time are sketchy "budgets" of the families of "outstanding workers." One such budget pertained to a "typical" family of seven which included five wage-earners and two dependents at school.[13] The main purpose of exercises of this kind, it may be assumed, is to create a favorable impression abroad, or perhaps to inspire the ordinary wage-earner in the USSR to greater efforts in his job; it is surely not to provide a continuous public record of the changing trends in the level of representative incomes and expenditures of Soviet families.

There is evidence indicating that the Soviet government continues collecting sampling data on family budgets, both urban and rural, but only for the benefit of a few trusted officials with a recognized "need to know." That even the community of Soviet social scientists is excluded from this category was brought out in a short, heavily-veiled published account of a meeting held in December 1961 by a group of economists and statisticians. According to the report, the group was discussing "the tasks facing the economic profession in the light of the decisions of the 22nd Congress of the CPSU."[14] The meeting seems to have taken an unexpected turn when a number of younger economists began urging that the Central Statistical Administration adopt a more permissive approach in its treatment of the vast stores of unpublished statistical data under its control. They pressed, in particular, "for more adequate public use of the various sampling and other partial statistical observations in its files," and several speakers suggested that if the agency did not plan to use the voluminous sampling data it had amassed, the material should be made available to economists for scholarly analysis. This suggestion finally emerged as the sense of the meeting.

In a Soviet setting this kind of initiative from below comes close to a breakdown of discipline. Accordingly, the chairman of the meeting, the elderly S. G. Strumilin, a veteran of many political battles against "enemies of the people" among Soviet economists, found it necessary to interpose his own sobering influence between the besieged Central Statistical Administration and his younger colleagues. In the words of the cryptic published account:

Academician S. G. Strumilin, by way of referring to these requests, noted in his address that while expanding the practice of releasing statistical data, we should approach more carefully the selection of published figures, displaying in such matters the necessary vigilance. As long, Strumilin stressed, as there has been no acceptance of universal and complete disarmament, owing to the resistance of the imperialists, data of a statistical character serve not only the aims of scientific information but can also be utilized by the agents of imperialism for elaborating their aggressive plans.[15]

The Invisible Taxes

Another sector of economic policy that remains almost totally obscure to the Soviet citizen as well as the outside observer is the distribution of the tax burden in the USSR. The USSR has always had two systems of taxation. One, a survival of the early NEP period (1921-27), is a simple and direct income tax, openly collected and based on the old-fashioned principle of ability to pay; it is mildly progressive, rising up to a rate of 13 percent. This tax, which recently has been contributing only 7 percent of total state revenue, is now undergoing a gradual, if uncertain, process of abolition. In May 1960 it was announced that it would be abolished in stages and disappear by 1965. In October 1962, however, after the completion of two of the projected six stages, the process of abolition was discontinued until further notice.

The second, principal system of taxation in the USSR belongs to the realm of the "invisible." Known as the "tax on turnover," it came into existence as one of the major innovations of the financial reform of September 1930, along with the beginning of the drive for massive capital expansion in industry. It is levied on all consumer goods, which are technically classified as "sold" to the population, but not on capital goods, which are treated as merely "transferred" to agencies of the state. According to one estimate, a few groups of consumption items, such as fibers, meats, fats, grains, alcohol, and tobacco provide the bulk, about 85 percent, of the turnover tax revenue.[16]

Neither the retail outlet that sells the article nor the consumer who buys it has any knowledge of how much turnover tax is included in the price of each article. The levy is imposed at the time the article passes from the factory

[12] Janet Chapman, *Real Wages in Soviet Russia Since 1928*, Boston, Harvard University Press, 1963.
[13] "What is Behind the Figures," *Moscow News*, March 30, 1957.
[14] *Vestnik statistiki* (Moscow), January 1962, p. 86.
[15] *Ibid.*
[16] Nicholas Spulber, *The Soviet Economy*, New York, Norton, 1962, p. 37.

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into the wholesale phase of the distribution process, the rates—which presumably vary considerably—being communicated exclusively to the appropriate wholesale agencies by the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry apparently determines the rates on the basis of decisions made by the State Planning Commission (Gosplan), which is responsible for balancing the money incomes and expenditures of the population. Every consumer commodity, in a sense, is given its own "plan" for raising a given amount of tax from the public, based, it may be assumed, on what the traffic will bear. Only the total amount of the turnover tax collected during the year is reported, the aggregate figure being published in the annual summary of the receipts and expenditures of the USSR state budget. In the budget presented for the calendar year 1964, the turnover tax is expected to contribute 35.1 billion rubles, or nearly 40 percent of total planned government revenues.[17]

Price Setting

Another riddle Western economists have long pondered is the question of who sets prices in the USSR, and what are the principles by which the price structure is determined. All that is revealed in official literature is that all the important prices emerge from the center, where they are prepared "by Gosplan in consultation with the Ministry of Finance," ready for transmission to the operating agencies in the field. Beyond that there is no explicit explanation as to how, or on what basis, or of what component elements prices in the Soviet economy are made up.

Official texts touching on the subject usually offer vague verbal formulas such as the following:

The formation of prices under socialism is planned, but the price determination is carried out with due regard for the economic laws that operate in a socialist society. At the base of the price lies the value of the commodity. Prices in a socialist society deviate from cost; these deviations, however, do not occur spontaneously . . . but are determined by the state in the interest of the development of the national economy and the raising of the welfare of the toilers.[18]

This goes no further than to say that prime costs of production enter somewhere in the process of price formation, and the wording is flexible enough to allow for any desired margin of "deviation," both in determining the costs and in fixing the relation of costs and price in individual cases, as required by the "public interest." All that emerges from this, or from numerous other, much longer, explanations is an assertion to the effect that Marx's price theory is correct and that Soviet price-setting principles, whatever they are, are solidly based on Marx and are therefore equally correct. In the words of one careful student of Soviet economic practice, "the higher authorities of the economic bureaucracy who handle price-formation do not want to be restricted in their freedom of action by general principles." [19] Or, for that matter, by strictures of professional economists; not even the leading authorities in the field of economics are privy to the price-setting secrets of the bureaucrats. One of the venerable members of the profession, Academician V. Nemchinov, complained not long ago that "the

[17] For a detailed discussion of the turnover tax, see the author's "Taxes and the Soviet Citizen" in *Problems of Communism*, Vol. VIII, No. 5, pp. 21-26.

[18] *Kratkii ekonomicheskii slovar* (Concise Economic Dictionary), Moscow, 1958, p. 370.

[19] H. Hirsch, *Quantity Planning and Price Planning in the Soviet Union*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1961, p. 176.

Caption upper right: "Bureaucratic Blower." (A play on the Russian words for "dandelion" and "cheating.")

—*From* **Krokodil** *(Moscow), May 30, 1962.*

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task of planning prices has been farmed out to a small group of experts." [20]

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Individual economic indicators, to be sure, appear and disappear in published statistics in the USSR, but the system of economic secrecy endures and evidently has genuine utility for the Soviet leaders. How may this utility be defined?

Soviet leaders have reason to be satisfied with the basic performance of the economic institutions they have developed. They have now at their disposal a planning mechanism that can force the growth, at high rates, of the essential products required for heavy industrial expansion and for a strong military posture. The external power needs of the state are at all times amply and conspicuously satisfied. Nor are there any immediate problems in regard to the maintenance of internal security.

[20] *Ekonomicheskaia gazeta* (Moscow), October 16, 1961, p. 19.

Yet there remains among Soviet leaders a sense of insecurity about the firmness of their hold upon the minds of the citizens, and they fear the effect of a free circulation of data relating to the state of the domestic economy and the condition of the Soviet consumer. Unlike the absolute rulers of prerevolutionary times, the leaders of the Communist Party govern in a skeptical environment, and they need some working substitute for the old principle of authority by divine right. Experience has taught them that infallibility is the safest principle on which to seek acceptance by the people. Since it is impossible to exclude altogether the challenge of conflicting ideologies, and in particular the notions of self-government, the party leadership wants the citizens, as well as the world, to believe that the Soviet system produces the best results. It also knows that in order to preserve its grip on the government, it must deprive the citizens not only of the means to change the leadership, but also of any facts that may prompt them to question the authority of the rulers.

Keeping Up with the Censor

By Maurice Friedberg

Governments and even political systems in Russia—to paraphrase Trotsky's famous dictum—come and go, but censorship remains, in spite of the official Soviet claim that "the October Revolution brought an end to censorship—both Tsarist and bourgeois." [1]

Indeed, the whole world knows that censorship has only been perfected under the Soviet regime, but what is less well known is the fact that well before the revolution the Russian Communist leaders had been preparing the groundwork for a censorship system of their own. As early as 1905 Lenin wrote in his article "Party Organization and Party Literature":

We want to create and we shall create a free press, free not only from the police, but also free from capital, free from careerism. It will also be free *from bourgeois-anarchistic individualism.*[2]

Mr. Friedberg is Associate Professor of Russian and head of the Russian Division at Hunter College, New York. He is author of Russian Classics in Soviet Jackets *(New York, Columbia University Press, 1962).*

[1] *Bolshaia sovetskaia entsiklopedia*, 1st ed., Vol. XVI (1934), p. 474.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, 3rd ed., Vol. VIII, Moscow, 1931, p. 388. Emphasis added.

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The cryptic reference to "bourgeois-anarchistic individualism" was made more explicit twelve years later when Lenin returned to the subject of freedom of the press in an article written a few months before the Bolshevik seizure of power:

The capitalists (and with them, wittingly or unwittingly, many Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks) define as "freedom of the press" a state of affairs under which censorship is abolished and all parties freely publish all kinds of newspapers. In reality, this is not freedom of the press, but freedom to deceive the oppressed and exploited masses of the people by the rich, by the bourgeoisie.[3]

Three days after the Bolshevik *coup d'état* of November 7, 1917, Lenin signed a decree prohibiting the publication of all opposition newspapers. To pacify public opinion at home and abroad, the decree stressed the temporary character of the measure:

As soon as the new order becomes stabilized, all administrative restrictions of the press will be lifted and complete freedom of the press will be established, subject only to limitations of legal liability, in accordance with the broadest and most progressive legislation on this problem.[4]

This decree was never revoked, and it remains to this day more alive than Article 125 of the Soviet Constitution, which guarantees Soviet citizens freedom of the press.

What is more, Glavlit (Main Administration for Literary Affairs and Publishing), the Soviet censorship agency, is the only governmental institution in the USSR which has functioned under the same name ever since Tsarist days. Founded almost a century ago, it was part of the Imperial Ministry of Internal Affairs from 1865 to 1917.[5] On June 6, 1922, the Soviet government issued a decree reestablishing the agency under the same name, and specifying that one of the two deputy chiefs of Glavlit should be a representative of the security police. Pre-publication censorship was to guarantee that no undesirable book would be published, and post-publication censorship was to see to it that all printed materials would be published in the approved form and with the censor's corrections.[6]

Thereafter, under Stalin's guidance, supplementary degrees enlarged and elaborated upon the scope of censorship control. Thus on June 6, 1931, a decree of the RSFSR Council of People's Commissars empowered Glavlit to supervise "manuscripts, drawings, paintings, broadcasts, lectures and exhibits to be printed, made public and disseminated." The agency was also directed to prepare lists of works whose publication and dissemination was forbidden.[7] On August 10, 1931, the same body decreed that, with a few exceptions, every published item must carry on the last page the number of the local Glavlit representative who authorized the publication.[8] Another decree, issued on February 26, 1934, established special criteria for the censorship of all domestic, exported and imported plays, films, broadcasts, ballets and circus acts. Any of these could be banned for a variety of reasons, such as "propaganda directed against the Soviet system and the dictatorship of the proletariat," "divulging of state secrets," "arousing national and religious fanaticism," "pornography," and even "ideological weakness," "mysticism" and "anti-artistic character."[9] The censors were thus not only appointed guardians of political purity and public morals, but also judges of what is and what is not art, and their verdicts were to be final.

On November 1, 1934, a joint decree of the RSFSR Commissariat of Education, the RSFSR Commissariat of Justice, and the USSR Commissariat of Internal Affairs (the NKVD)

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[3] Quoted in A. I. Nazarov, *Ocherki istorii sovetskovo knigoizdatelstva*, Moscow, Iskusstvo, 1952, p. 63.

[4] Text in *O partiinoi i sovetskoi pechati: sbornik dokumentov*, Moscow, Pravda, 1954, p. 173.

[5] *Bolshaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia*, 1st ed., Vol. XVII (1930), p. 138.

[6] See *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Russia and the Soviet Union*, Michael T. Florinsky, Ed., New York-Toronto-London, 1961, p. 72. For a documented description of day-to-day activities of the Smolensk division of Glavlit on the eve of World War II, see Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk Under Soviet Rule*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1958, pp. 364-77.

[7] L. G. Fogelevich, *Osnovnye direktivy i zakonodatelstvo o pechati, sistematicheskii sbornik*, 5th ed, Moscow, Gosizdat Sovetskoe Zakonodatelstvo, 1935, p. 110.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 112. The exceptions have become more numerous since Stalin's death. Thus, for obvious reasons, publications of the party's Central Committee are exempt from it. So are most publications intended for non-Soviet, particularly Western, audiences which might be antagonized by such overly conspicious marks of censorship. Religious publications usually do not carry this stamp, perhaps because it might be misinterpreted as the State's explicit approval of—as distinct from mere acquiescence to—their contents. On the other hand, there have been numerous instances of careful "editing" of Khrushchev's own extemporaneous remarks before their appearance in print.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 121.

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reaffirmed the earlier decrees and made special provision for the confiscation of banned items (such as films). Plays, films, ballet, etc., were to be reviewed by the censors at least ten days before their official premiere, and at every performance two seats, not farther from the stage than the fourth row, were to be reserved for censors.

In book publishing, even the technical make-up of books was to be passed upon by the censors after Glavlit order No. 149 of August 11, 1935, declared war on "formalistic" (that is, modernistic) book jackets and bindings.[10] Errata slips were authorized only for minor typographical errors not to exceed ten in number; otherwise, "pages must be torn out or glued in." This was evidently designed to permit official changes in Soviet history.[11] Perhaps to encourage authors to "update" their books politically, a decree of the USSR Council of People's Commissars of August 17, 1934, declared that "revised and corrected editions are not considered reprints"; as a result authors could henceforth be rewarded for their vigilance with additional royalties.[12] A regular feature of the 1930's was also the periodic purging of books and periodicals in libraries. These purges became so severe that in 1935 a leading Glavlit official issued an order to stop the "pilfering" and "damaging" of library collections.[13]

The years following World War II witnessed even stronger interference in book publishing. Thus, on May 22, 1952, the CPSU Central Committee ordered that the publication of the five-volume set of works by the prerevolutionary writer M. I. Mikhailov be discontinued because initial volumes included his "politically" and "artistically immature" writings as well as translations of "reactionary foreign poets."[14]

The massive effort during the same period to rewrite the works of many well-known Soviet writers was accompanied by a rapid growth in the number of titles appearing on the unofficial index of forbidden books.[15]

Aims and Methods

The "thaw" that followed Stalin's death has resulted in a less rigid application of the existing censorship laws. The laws themselves, however, have never been rescinded and a return to a stricter observance of their letter and spirit could be accomplished at any time. At the same time, many of the old practices continue unabated, and their purpose—thought control—is quite clearly stated in a recent Soviet textbook on bibliography:

The bibliography must offer criteria of evaluation and selection . . . [*and*] *be guided by principles which ensure a correct attitude toward literature and contribute to promoting progressive—as well as criticizing reactionary—views and ideas.*[16]

There is a good deal of other, more direct evidence that many of the traditional controls survive. Thus public catalogues still as a rule contain only a selected part of a library's holdings, while a centrally-managed discard procedure eliminates materials no longer in consonance with the party line. Foreign travellers have verified in recent years the existence in Soviet libraries of "secret collections" which may be consulted only with the permission of party, police and educational authorities.[17]

It is true that in 1956 certain works which had earlier been confiscated were returned to open collections.[18] But book burning, though perhaps on a diminished scale, continues as an integral part of Soviet cultural policies. Thus in 1957 a Soviet scholar noted that libraries must replace books which have lost their value; and the books that grow "obsolete" most

[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 117, 122-23 and 125.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 117. The best known recent example of the disposition of a major "erratum" is the treatment accorded the article on the late secret chief Lavrentii Beria in the fifth volume of the second edition of *Bolshaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia*, originally published in 1950. "Following Beria's execution as a 'traitor' in 1953, subscribers to the 'Encyclopedia' received several replacement pages with following instructions: 'Cut out pages 21 to 24 of volume V, including the full-size portrait and substitute the enclosed text for them.' This new text, which was to replace Beria's life history and likeness, consisted of a series of illustrations of the Bering Sea and articles on Auguste de Beriot (a Belgian violinist) and Friedrich Wilhelm Bergholz (an eighteenth-century courtier at the court of Holstein)." See Paul L. Horecky, *Libraries and Bibliographic Centers in the Soviet Union*, Bloomington, Ind., Indiana University Publications (Slavic and East European Series, vol. XIV), 1959, p. 156.

[12] Fogelevich, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

[13] Horecky, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-57; also Fainsod, *op. cit.*

[14] *Sovetskaia pechat v dokumentakh*, Moscow, Gospolitizdat, 1961, pp. 35-56.

[15] The problem of textual revisions effected in works of Soviet literature in order to bring them into conformity with current Soviet policies was discussed in two articles by the present writer. See Maurice Friedberg, "New Editions of Soviet Belle Lettres: A Study in Politics and Palimpsest," *The American Slavic and East European Review*, Vol. XIII, No. 1 (February 1954), pp. 72-88; also "Soviet Literature and Retroactive Truth," *Problems of Communism*, Vol III, No. 1 (January-February 1954), pp. 31-39.

[16] Horecky, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

[17] Frederick C. Barghoorn, *The Soviet Cultural Offensive*, Princeton, N. J., Princeton University Press, 1960, p. 118.

[18] Horecky, op. cit., p. 157.

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rapidly are those dealing with political and socio-economic problems.[19] Similarly, two years later, on October 2, 1959, *Pravda* complained about certain aspects of the work of Soviet libraries and recommended familiar remedies:

. . . a substantial part of the public does not benefit from library services and fails to receive the help necessary for independent work with books. . . . The library shelves should also be cleared of obsolete books. *These should be replaced with what the readers need.* [*Emphasis added.*]

It is more than likely that Stalin's works, once published in hundreds of millions of copies, are now the victims of the book purges. In any event, they are now being retroactively eradicated from book publishing statistics, which now use a new classification: "Founders of Marxism-Leninism" [20]—a very convenient way to avoid the necessity of mentioning the late dictator. Similar procedures are applied to other authors who have fallen into disfavor since 1953, such as the former American Communist writer Howard Fast, for years the most widely printed American author in the USSR, who after the Hungarian Revolution of October 1956 broke with the Communist Party. When a delegation of US book publishers visited the Soviet Union in the fall of 1962, its members received from Soviet authorities a list of twenty-three "best-selling" American authors for the period 1918-1959. Howard Fast was not to be found on the list.[21]

Since the very existence of censorship in the USSR is vehemently denied by the Soviet authorities, it should come as no surprise that much of the actual working of the system is shrouded in mystery. The data presented here are the result of a long and laborious sifting of official Soviet sources for evidence of the methods employed.

Generally speaking, the principal functions of Soviet censorship are threefold: (1) to prevent the appearance of wholly "harmful" printed matter; (2) to restrict the circulation of partly objectionable works; and (3) to "purge" publications of undesirable passages.

[19] N. I. Buzliakov, *Voprosy planirovaniia pechati v SSSR*, Moscow, Iskusstvo, 1957, pp. 23-24.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 98.
[21] *Book Publishing in the USSR*, Report of the Delegation of U.S. Book Publishers Visiting the USSR, August 20-September 17, 1962, New York, American Book Publishers Council, 1963, p. 95.

An Editor Explains

The weekly *Moscow News* recently (Sept. 5, 1964) reprinted a generally friendly letter to the editor from an American visitor, who said in part:

Of course, not all is "peaches and cream"—in any country anywhere, including our own. . . . We were disappointed that although Pravda *and* Izvestia *can be bought on newsstands in Rome, Paris and New York, visitors to Moscow are still unable to buy Western newspapers.*

In an appended note the editor responded as follows:

A good many Western newspapers and magazines are sold in our country, including Amerika, Angliia, Liberation *and* Alger Républicain. *However, we do not sell Western publications which carry misinformation or those which call for war. In the Soviet Union a law was enacted in 1951 banning war propaganda in any form, including through the medium of the press.*

The first category includes almost all printed matter originating in the West. Except for publications of a technical character, no Western material may be disseminated among rank-and-file readers. Soviet authorities have remained adamant, in spite of numerous diplomatic interventions, in their refusal to permit the setting up in the USSR of stores selling Western books and periodicals—counterparts, as it were, of such firms as the Four Continents Book Corporation in New York or the Maison du Livre Etranger in Paris. (The only partial exception is a store in Moscow where one may obtain French classics and works by several modern French left-wing authors.) Western newspapers, too, are still unobtainable, even for tourists. Soviet authorities are simply wary of anything printed abroad and not passed upon by Soviet censors.

However, since it would be undesirable to keep the public completely cut off from Western sources of information, selected excerpts from the Western press are translated and distributed in various forms by Soviet publishing houses. The new Soviet periodical *Za rubezhom* (Abroad), which prints extracts from the non-Soviet-bloc press, is a good example. A similar situation prevails in the case of classic

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American and West European literature: it is now possible to purchase in the USSR the works, say, of Mark Twain or Charles Dickens, *in English*—but only in *Soviet* editions. Otherwise, non-technical Western books and periodicals are generally obtainable only in the "restricted" sections of Soviet libraries.[22]

The second category of printed matter controlled by Soviet censorship includes mainly Western publications prepared abroad specifically for Soviet audiences under terms of agreements with the Soviet government (*e.g.*, the United States Information Agency's Russian-language magazine *Amerika*, the British *Angliia*, the Russian edition of the *UNESCO Courier* and other United Nations journals), as well as books and periodicals from other Communist countries, particularly Poland and Yugoslavia and, lately, China. The circulation of such material is severely restricted, and while "legal" in the strict sense of the word, these foreign publications are usually very difficult to obtain.

Finally, the "editing out" of undesirable passages (and insertion of "desirable" ones) affects most commonly domestic Soviet literary and journalistic output, although the "rewriting" method is often applied to non-Soviet material as well, particularly foreign plays. A striking example is the case of an old operetta by Paul Abrahams, *The Ball at the Savoy*, which was presented in Moscow in 1957. According to *Pravda* of April 12 of that year, this "bourgeois" operetta was provided with a new Soviet libretto by Ye. Shatunovski:

The new libretto. . .naturally leaves out the more indecent situation of the original operetta. An attempt was even made to expose the shenanigans of the bourgeois press . . . and a representative of the lower classes is introduced into the play—Daisy's uncle Celestin, an active member of the waiters' union. An attempt was also made to depict "class antagonisms." . . .

Nevertheless, even this libretto was found unsatisfactory. *Pravda* criticized it for propagating "the 'charms' of 'chic' bourgeois life, with its hypocrisy and immorality," which "cannot fail to evoke fears regarding the theater's fidelity to the ideological and artistic achievements of the Soviet operetta."

On the other hand it should be noted that writings of Western non-Communist sociologists, historians, economists and political figures are now being occasionally published in the USSR—but not without textual changes. This suspicious attitude received formal expression in a resolution of the CPSU Central Committee of June 4, 1959, which ordered that such works "be published in limited printings. *Passages of no scholarly or practical interest are to be deleted from them,*" and "they are to be supplied with lengthy introductions and annotations."[23] Thus not only is Western literature in the field of the social sciences made available to Soviet scholars only in censored form, but all remaining deviations in the published texts from the Soviet party line must be pinpointed and rebutted.

As to the occurrence of censorship changes in classical Russian literature, recent evidence seems to contradict this author's earlier conclusion that such texts do not appear to be tampered with by Soviet censors.[24] Serious doubts in this matter have been raised recently by V. N. Orlov in an introduction to a book on the problems of publishing prerevolutionary Russian poetry. Orlov writes:

Not infrequently it turns out that—as a result of any number of accidental circumstances—the author's final version is less valuable ideologically and artistically *than earlier versions, and to give preference to this version only because of formal adherence to the principle of following* [*the poet's*] *"last will" is definitely incorrect.*[25]

Change After Stalin?

Soviet writers, of course, have always been subject to the censor's whims, and few have forgotten how ruthlessly Stalin expunged both writers and their works in the last two decades of his rule. During the post-Stalin "thaw," on May 21, 1957, *Literaturnaia gazeta* reported the remarks on this subject by the "conservative" critic A. Dymshits:

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[22] The suspicious attitude of the Soviet authorities towards foreign books was eloquently demonstrated late in 1959 when several volumes, including books on Hitler by famous British historians, were removed from the British Book Exhibition in Moscow (Barghoorn, *op. cit.*, p. 267). There were similar incidents at displays of American books in Moscow.

[23] *Sovetskaia pechat . . .*, p. 368. Italics added.

[24] See Maurice Friedberg, *Russian Classics in Soviet Jackets*, New York and London, Columbia University Press, 1962.

[25] The literal translation of the last word *(nepravomerno)* is "unlawful" or "inconsistent." See *Izdanie klassicheskoi literatury: iz opyta "Biblioteki poeta,"* Moscow, Iskusstvo, 1963, p. 12. Italics added. For indications of similar practices with regard to plays from the classical repertory in the theaters of the Soviet Union, see below the quotation from the article by Alexander Kron.

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Everyone remembers how the poetry of Yesenin, Blok and Bunin was crudely bludgeoned out of existence. We are done with this sort of thing forever. . . .

Yet even in the Soviet Union there is a good deal of public disagreement with the conclusion that censorship in the USSR is a thing of the past. Thus the same issue of *Literaturnaia gazeta* featured a speech by the Ukrainian writer Mykola Bazhan which suggested that Dymshits' burial of censorship was premature, that censorship still existed, although in different forms. "Many zealous editors [sic] went so far as to cross out Stalin's name in our works," declared Bazhan to prove his point. And, indeed, following the full rehabilitation of Sergei Yesenin, the bohemian peasant poet who committed suicide in the 1920's, a letter by six Soviet writers in *Literaturnaia gazeta* (February 25, 1958) warned that the publication of Yesenin's works should be preceded by a thorough study of his works by "specialists in texts"—a term which, in the Soviet Union, hardly refers to ivory-tower scholars.

Conflicting views on the state of censorship in post-Stalin Russia were also in evidence at the 1957 plenary sessions of the All-Russian Theater Society, the proceedings of which were briefly reported in the March 1957 issue of the magazine *Teatr*. On this occasion again, a participant strongly intimated that the Stalinist past was over for good. M. Shtraukh related the story how many years ago—*i.e.*, under Stalin—a party bureaucrat came to a preview of a new comedy. Everyone was terrified because the dignitary did not laugh; only later did the actors discover that the official suffered from a paralysis of facial muscles and was physically unable to smile. Yet Shtraukh's "optimistic" report did not quite tally with the speech by Yu. Yurovski:

Not long ago [i.e., *after Stalin—MF*] *I read a play with a collective farm wedding in one of the scenes. At the wedding, a collective farmer, aged* 100, *outdanced all the others—all, that is, except the party organizer. I asked the playwright whatever he meant by it; it certainly would not have happened that way. The writer answered: "In the original version he out-danced the party organizer as well, but they* [*sic*] *corrected my script."*

A similar instance of arbitrary revision of a writer's work was reported in *Pravda* on September 12, 1958. It appears that a Lithuanian writer submitted an unfavorable book review to that republic's newspaper *Tiesa*. Two months later, he wrote on the subject for the Moscow *Literaturnaia gazeta*, and, of course, his second review was equally unfavorable. Nevertheless, in its newest version, the article had miraculously become laudatory. Complained the aggrieved author in *Pravda:*

This happened because the editors of Literaturnaia gazeta, *after receiving from me the article they had commissioned, began writing into it evaluations that did not appear anywhere in the article as I wrote it, and then took it upon themselves to publish all this without even taking the trouble to inform me of the changes they had made.*

Fortunately, such crass Stalinist tactics are now considered in poor taste, and they were condemned in no uncertain terms by the Deputy Minister of Culture N. Danilov in an article in *Sovetskaia kultura* of March 1, 1960:

There have been occasions when certain directors and editors have made major changes in scripts without even informing the writers. The studios have now been forbidden to make any changes in or additions to scripts already approved by studio directors without the participation and consent of the authors.

Nevertheless any writer or artist is still completely helpless when faced with "spontaneous, righteous protests of the people," such as occurred, according to *Izvestia* of January 27, 1961, after the editors of the journal *Iskusstvo* (Art) had selected and sent to the printer a "modernistic" cover for their publication:

The workers of the Moscow Printing Press No. 5, where this journal is printed, have written indignantly that these drawings are a clear tribute to formalism. The editors were forced to change the cover. . . .

Does such interference infringe upon the freedom of expression? Not at all, according to *Izvestia* (September 3, 1957): "Naturally, everyone is entitled to write what he likes and how he likes. But must everything that is written be published in a magazine?"

All available evidence suggests that the number of institutions and functionaries exercising censorship has greatly increased in the post-Stalin period. There are currently about three hundred publishing houses in the USSR (though many of them do not have printing

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facilities of their own),[26] and each apparently employs a censor on its staff who in turn is subject to supervision by local party authorities. On February 24, 1957, for example, *Pravda* critizicized the Propaganda and Agitation Department of the party's Kirov Province Committee for "doing a poor job of checking the work of the provincial book-publishing house," which resulted in the appearance of A. Zinovev's "Story of Marfita" in the almanac *Kirovskaia nov* (Kirov Virgin Soil). The story, it seems, depicted too many Communists as villains.

A Soviet censor's lot is not a happy one, since he is ultimately responsible for the political "timeliness" of each work he approves—something requiring a degree of political instinct bordering on clairvoyance. As a result, whenever the political situation is likely to change, Soviet censors find it prudent to postpone the publication of all materials under their scrutiny until the last possible moment. The resulting delays have been publicly criticized, but, needless to say, without mention of the cause. Thus on July 6, 1958, *Pravda* complained that the publication of Soviet periodicals often lags much behind schedule (Western newsmen stationed in Moscow have long ago learned to expect important news whenever publications are late in coming out), and only ten days later it voiced alarm because textbooks for the coming school year were not yet ready. More recently, on August 24, 1962, *Pravda* again upbraided hapless "authors and editors who have not yet finished their work on the manuscripts of many [text] books"—this a week before the opening of school! The chronic shortage of textbooks in the USSR—as *Literaturnaia gazeta* noted on September 12, 1957—is also caused by the much too frequent revision of the texts, but it refrained from pointing out that the foremost reason for such revisions is the necessity of synchronizing the textbooks with the frequent changes in party policies.

A similar situation prevails in the publication of fiction. Writing in *Literaturnaia gazeta* of February 16, 1960, the critic Boris Yampolski pointed out that no book is merely "reprinted." A reprint is treated as a new manuscript and it must pass through the hands of numerous "reviewers," "editors" and so forth. These "editors," Yampolski stresses, are oblivious to the fact that the book had already been "edited" before it went to press for the first time, and they usually make "suggestions" for *new* "textual revisions."

In matters of major importance, local censors may refuse to assume responsibility for making a decision and may refer the problem to a higher authority. An interesting instance of this was reported recently in *The New Republic* (June 27, 1964) by Philip Ben, the Moscow correspondent of *Le Monde* and the Tel Aviv *Maariv*:

"Who selects the articles, the novels, the poetry, the memoirs which you publish?," I asked a member of the editorial board [*of the Soviet* literary monthly Novyi mir]. *"I can assure you, he replied, "that it is the exclusive responsibility of the editorial board. We accept the entire responsibility for everything we publish. We do not ask anybody's permission." Then, after a moment of reflection, he added: "Of course, there are exceptions, like Solzhenitsyn's novel* [One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, *a chronicle of life in a Stalinist concentration camp—MF*]. *In this case, after we read it and became aware of both the literary value and the 'explosive' character of the manuscript (typed so badly on an archaic typewriter that our copy-readers at first didn't want to read it), we set it in type, made only a few copies and sent one to Nikita Sergeievich* [*Khrushchev*]. *Some time later we were told to go on with publication."*

Mr. Ben continues:

According to the rumors in Moscow, after Lebedev [*the allegedly liberal chief of Khrushchev's personal cabinet—MF*] *read the manuscript and recommended it to Khrushchev, the latter ordered more copies to be printed which he distributed to all members and alternate members of the party Presidium. On the first vote a majority decided against publication. Then the opposite decision prevailed.*

The most outspoken exposé of the interference of Soviet censorship in the arts ever to be published in the USSR appeared late in 1956, *i.e.* at the height of the post-Stalin "thaw," in an article contained in the celebrated second volume of the almanac *Literaturnaia Moskva*. In the article, entitled "A Writer's Notes," the Soviet playwright Alexander Kron addressed himself to some problems of the Soviet theater, but his observations are relevant to all aspects of Soviet cultural life:

Nobody is surprised now that magazine re-

[26] *Partiinaia zhizn*, No. 5 (March 1963), pp. 39-43. Nominally, many of these publishing houses are run by various non-governmental bodies, but they are no less state enterprises than the recently-created press agency Novosti; its output, while officially inspired, does not bear the imprimatur of the Soviet government, as does the older agency, TASS.

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views carry the name of the editor next to the name of the author. It looks as if the book (like the old civil-war army units) had a commanding officer and a [political] commissar both. . . . Things are even worse in the theater. In all the contracts concluded between a playwright and a theater there is a clause stating that the author undertakes to make any changes and corrections demanded by the theater; refusal involves economic sanctions. . . . Thus belief in the play and respect for its basic ideas disappear and are replaced by an irresponsible attitude toward the text. When this attitude encounters no resistance from the contemporary public, it is even extended to the classics. In addition to the theaters themselves, there are many other echelons of authority which have the power, if not the right, to dictate their will to the author, either directly, or through the theater. As a result, the play is edited by everyone who feels like taking the trouble, and any current propaganda drive, like the campaign against drunkenness, for example, can serve as a pretext for demanding changes in a play that is already being performed.

Kron also mentioned the censors (known euphemistically as "instructors" or "inspectors") who are present at each play's preview:

Nowadays the procedure is gone through in a somewhat more liberal form than it was, but the substance is little changed. . . . It is considered quite a normal proceeding for editors to delete or insert whole paragraphs.[27]

Literaturnaia Moskva drew fire from many quarters for publishing Kron's article, and even Khrushchev criticized it publicly.[28]

Writers, Readers, and Censors

The decentralization of the state apparatus, the ideological "thaws" alternating with "freezes," the frequent changes in government and party personnel, and the proliferation of the publishing houses that have marked the Khrushchev era could not but result in much confusion and a measure of latitude in the enforcement of censorship regulations. Another consequence of these developments has been a rather pronounced political differentiation of Soviet literary organizations and their publications, which may now be roughly divided into "liberal" (or "revisionist") and "conservative" (or "neo-Stalinist") categories. Thus the Moscow branch of the Writers' Union is "liberal," and so are *Literaturnaia gazeta, Novyi mir* and *Teatr*. On the other hand the Russian Republic Union of Writers is "conservative," and so are *Oktiabr, Neva* and *Zvezda*. To be sure, the differences are not very pronounced if judged by Western standards, but they cannot fail to impress those who remember the strict uniformity of the Soviet press, say, fifteen years ago.

The existence of the schism has recently been publicly admitted by the "neo-Stalinist" writer Semion Tregub. Speaking at the Eighth Plenary Session of the board of the Russian Republic Writers' Union, Tregub noted that nowadays "the basis [for literary criticism] is not *what* is printed, or *how* it is written, but where it is printed. If it is in *Oktiabr,* then [the "liberals" would say—MF]—let's go after it."[29] A number of controversial writers, *Izvestia* seemed to suggest on July 15, 1963, were quick to grasp the new opportunity of "playing" one Soviet publisher against another:

Hacks of all sorts of literature are taking advantage of the large number of publishing houses for their own selfish purposes. Rejected by one publishing house, their manuscripts migrate to another.

And, indeed, it has become apparent that some Russian-language literary periodicals in the non-Russian republics—*Literaturnaia Gruziia* in Georgia offers, perhaps, the best example—will occasionally print prose and verse which even the "liberal" Moscow journals would hesitate to accept. Furthermore, some of the more "sensational" books printed in the USSR in recent years were made available by small provincial publishing houses which under Stalin were noted for their timidity and usually contented themselves with merely reprinting books that had previously appeared in Moscow and Leningrad. For instance, Fiodor Sologub's *Petty Demon,* a famous "decadent" prerevolutionary novel long on the Soviet "index," was brought out—of all places—in the small Siberian town of Kemerovo. And *Pages from Tarussa,* a remarkable anthology of nonpolitical and unorthodox writing, was published in the sleepy backwater town of Kaluga with the blessings of the grand old man of the liberal Soviet writers, Konstantin Paustovski, and, ap-

[27] A. Kron, "A Writer's Notes," in *The Year of Protest, 1956,* Hugh McLean and Walter N. Vickery, eds., New York, Vintage Books, 1961, pp. 169-70.

[28] *Pravda,* Aug. 28, 1957. See also attack by Yelena Serebrovskaia in *Zvezda,* No. 6 (June 1957), pp. 198-202.

[29] *Literaturnaia Rossiia,* No. 15 (April 12), 1963.

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parently, without the benefit of clearance through the censorship chain of command.

Occasionally, post-Stalin censors have been entrusted with the task of undoing the harm caused by the excessive zeal of Stalinist censorship. This is in line with the current campaign to "restore" to the "original" form some of the Soviet prose, verse and drama altered on Stalin's orders.[30] A part of the same stream of developments is the report published in *Pravda* of October 28, 1962, that Eisenstein's famous film *Ten Days That Shook the World* will be remade in order to include all scenes which Stalin ordered deleted in 1926. Perhaps one should also include here the recent alleged destruction of all the remaining copies of Trofim Kichko's viciously antisemitic pamphlet *Judaism Without Embellishment*, a step caused by the uproar of indignation the tract produced abroad, including condemnation by several major Communist parties in the West.[31]

The best indicator of intense literary censorship usually is the existence of a black market in books. On May 14, 1964, *Vecherniaia Moskva*, the closest thing in the USSR to a tabloid newspaper, reported the smashing in Moscow of a ring of black marketeers dealing in "forbidden books." The "contraband" books included "immature"—that is, unorthodox—works by Soviet writers, originally published "legally" in the Soviet Union but, obviously, in amounts insufficient to meet the demand for them. According to *Vecherniaia Moskva*, these "immature" works are sought particularly eagerly if they have elicited praise "over there," *i.e.*, in the West. The black marketeers also sold "hostile volumes filled with slander [of the Soviet Union] and smuggled into our country from abroad." "Sooner or later," wrote the paper, "[the black marketeer] will sell them at triple what he paid for them." Next, according to the report, came "erotica and viciously anti-Soviet stuff. . . . from Madrid, Munich and New York publishers." Finally—and most important—there were among the items sold books printed illegally in the Soviet Union, including *Adventures* by Marina Tsvetaeva (a lyric poetess who had returned from exile to the USSR on the eve of World War II, only to commit suicide shortly thereafter; she was recently half-heartedly "rehabilitated") and works by two "unrehabilitated" poets, A. Efros, a White Guard officer, and Nikolai Gumiliov, executed by the Communists in the Civil War.

Mention should also be made of the recently widespread practice in the USSR of circulating literary works in typed or mimeographed form, including "informal" anthologies by several authors. Several such cases were reported in the Soviet press in the last few years.

But then, we must remember, reading and even possession of "illegal" literature has a long tradition in Russia. In the 19th century, virtually every member of the intelligentsia was acquainted with Belinski's famous letter to Gogol or with Radishchev's radically reformist *Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow*. At the same time, many writers of that period, unable to publish at home, had their works printed abroad; thus, some of Saltykov-Shchedrin's satire was published in the original Russian in Switzerland. This practice, too, continues in our days. In addition to the celebrated case of *Doctor Zhivago*, still unpublished in the USSR in spite of Pasternak's posthumous "rehabilitation," we now have in the West a small library of contemporary Soviet works smuggled in manuscript out of the Soviet Union. That some of them appear under pseudonyms (I. Ivanov, *Is There Life on Mars?;* Nikolai Arzhak, *This Is Moscow Speaking;* and the most prolific of them all, Abram Tertz, author of *The Trial Begins*, *The Fantastic Tales*, and the long essay *What Is Socialist Realism?*) is hardly surprising.

What is astounding is that some writers had their works printed under their real names. These include Valerii Tarsis (*The Bluebottle*) and Alexander Yesenin-Volpin, the son of the famous poet Sergei Yesenin (*A Leaf of Spring*, an anthology of verse and essays). According to reports, these two writers have been incarcerated in mental institutions—a "humane" method of dealing with political dissenters practiced in Russia long before 1917: such was, for example, the fate of Piotr Chadaiev, a friend of Pushkin, whose ideas the Tsar found unpalatable. It is also worth noting that the "illegal" works of contemporary Soviet writers are less politically-minded than one might expect them to be—another reminder that writers in the USSR yearn for free artistic experimentation with language and form as much as they miss the freedom of political expression.

A special reason for the difficulty of determining with any precision the standards and effectiveness of Soviet censorship during the post-Stalin period is the fact that the boundaries

[30] This process is described in a forthcoming article by the present writer, "Updating the Truth in Soviet Literature," in *Literature and Literary Politics in the Soviet Union*, A. Brumberg, ed., Praeger, 1965.

[31] This incident, however, did not prevent the Soviet censors from subsequently placing a stamp of approval on a very similar opus, *Catechism in Its True Colors*.

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of permissible expression are so often determined by critics functioning outside the normal censorship-editorial channels. Paul Abrahams' rewritten operetta *The Ball at the Savoy* (referred to earlier), for example, had presumably been approved for performance before it drew criticism, and we have no information on its subsequent fate. A similar interesting incident occurred only last summer. On July 12, 1964, *Pravda* published a hostile review of Alexander Shtein's play *Between Cloudbursts* in which the author, according to the reviewer, had committed a number of grave ideological errors, such as failing to demonstrate that the 1921 Kronstadt rebellion of Soviet sailors had really been inspired by foreign imperialists and White Guardists, that Trotsky was a "sworn enemy of Lenin," and so forth. The significance of the review was contained in the transparent suggestion that the published text of the play—*i.e.*, a text already approved during the "printing" stage of censorship—would have to be revised before the play could be staged. It would appear that the requirements of ideological conformity are applied more strictly to the theater than to printed matter.

Finally, allowance must also be made for the possibility of an outright veto on the part of the supreme authorities. Thus, in his speech of March 8, 1963, Khrushchev violently attacked the film *Lenin's Sentry* (*Zastava Ilicha*) for suggesting that the younger generation of Soviet citizens cannot rely on guidance from its elders, that it must, as it were, find its own answers to the dilemmas of life. The film, which Khrushchev had obviously seen at a preview (the writer Victor Nekrasov saw it, too, and liked it), has so far not been released. It is probably undergoing major revision.

All in all, things do not seem to have changed much since 1955 when I. Kuzmichev, an assistant editor of *Sovetskaia Estoniia* denounced in the CPSU theoretical journal *Kommunist* (No. 11, July) a number of common Soviet editorial practices, such as revising manuscripts without consulting their authors, substituting hackneyed but safe quotations for dangerously original ideas and similar editorial tricks of the censors' trade. Kuzmichev, to be sure, insisted on the editor's right to "suggest how the article could be improved," but this is obviously no easy task for the Soviet editor-censor to accomplish: "It is inadmissible," he complained, "that to this day no solid handbook on editorial practices exists." However, to devise a satisfactory manual of this kind is clearly impossible, and the inconsistencies will undoubtedly continue.

The most effective kind of censorship is, of course, self-censorship—that is, the editorial control exercised by the writer himself. Eager to have his work accepted for publication, an author is unlikely to submit anything that would stand no chance of being "passed." Soviet authorities stimulate this process positively by offering writers material incentives to follow the changes in party policies and incorporate them in new editions of previously published books. A substantially revised version of a work continues to be considered a "new" book and the author is rewarded with new royalties. Then there are also the various subcommittees of the Writers' Union where authors are encouraged to read works in progress and benefit from "comradely criticism." The "formal" stages of censorship come last.

The disastrous effects of censorship on the evolution of Soviet literature are well known. In periods of comparative leniency—in the 1920's and again during the past ten years—the more talented writers found it possible to direct their creative efforts towards the production of some memorable works. Conversely, during the heights of political terror and stringent censorship such as prevailed in the period from 1946 to 1953, little was produced that was read at that time and even less that is remembered today. We still have good reason to remember the warning voiced in 1921 by Yevgenii Zamiatin, another "unrehabilitated" Soviet writer:

I am afraid that we shall have no real literature as long as Russia's citizenry is looked upon as a child whose innocence must be protected. I am afraid that we shall have no real literature until we cure ourselves of a certain new catholicism which fears every word of heresy in no lesser degree than the old.[32]

And even more important, we should heed the admonition of Fiodor Tiutchev, one of Russia's greatest 19th century poets and, incidentally, for a time also the head of the Imperial Foreign Censorship Office:

Absolute and prolonged restriction and oppression cannot be imposed upon minds without causing substantial harm to the social organism as a whole. . . . In the long run, authority itself cannot escape the consequences of a similar regime.[33]

[32] E. Zamiatin, *Litsa*, New York, Izdatelstvo Imeni Chekhova, 1955, pp. 189-80.

[33] Quoted in Ernest J. Simmons, ed., *Continuity and Change in Russian and Soviet Thought*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1955, p. 426.

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The War Against Religion

EDITORS' NOTE: The war against religion in the Soviet Union is as old as the USSR itself, yet within the last few years it has reached a new height of intensity, if not sophistication. Mr. Willets in his article below discusses the current anti-religious campaign in its entire scope, analyzing the techniques used as well as the complex motivations that guide the party's atheistic propaganda. The companion piece by Mr. Fernier focuses on the special aspects of the anti-Judaic compaign, its political context and practical consequences.

De-opiating the Masses

By Harry Willetts

In the autumn of 1963, the Ideological Commission of the CPSU Central Committee reviewed the progress of the war on religion and decided to throw in reinforcements.[1] A new Institute of Scientific Atheism, to be attached to the Central Committee's Academy of Social Sciences, would co-ordinate all anti-religious research and teaching; a regular quota of university students would be trained as professional atheists, and all students in universities and medical schools would be required to take courses in atheism; a number of learned and political journals would publish regular anti-religious features; and the radio and television networks would put on more anti-religious programs. Finally, at the local level, party organizations were to set up councils or sections "on atheistic work" whose task would be to draw

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[1] For text of decision, see *Partinaia zhizn*, No. 2, 1964. See also *Pravda*, March 2, 1964.

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all interested bodies and the public at large into the struggle.

There have been more savage attacks on religion in the Soviet Union in the past, but never has the regime mounted such a massive and heavily-equipped campaign. How should we understand this apparently disproportionate effort to deal with what is nowadays supposed to be a minor and rapidly dwindling nuisance? If it is true that "the overwhelming majority of the Soviet people have broken with religion" and "become conscious atheists," that the religious are for the most part elderly people, peasants in remote rural areas, unskilled laborers, semi-literates, and housebound women, and if it is true, moreover, that most believers, in spite of their religion, are loyal to the regime and accept its social ideals, that education, the reclamation of rural slums, and the emancipation of still more women will in time dispel the lingering remnants of religious belief and practice, then why need the party do more than patiently exhibit the truths which, it insists, all mature human beings must acknowledge? [2]

There are, of course, believers whose hopes of salvation depend on defiance of Soviet laws and norms of social behavior. The "True Orthodox Church," for instance, considers that Anti-Christ was enthroned in Russia in 1917, and it continues to deal with the Soviet authorities as if they were his representatives. A variety of sects—among them Jehovah's Witnesses and the numerous Adventists and Baptists who refuse obedience to the leaders in Moscow—do their best to scamp the demands made on them by Soviet society. There are sectarians who refuse to perform military service, sectarians who will pay no taxes, sectarians who withhold their children from the "Godless" Soviet schools, sectarians who think it wicked to do a stroke more work than is necessary to keep body and soul together, sectarians who condemn all secular reading and entertainment, sectarians who reject medical aid in favor of prayer, and sectarians who try to avoid all intercourse whatsoever with the profane. Nor is it surprising that the Soviet authorities relentlessly pursue the orgiastic sects—the Molokane with their hysterogenic "jumping," the "shaking" and glossolalian Pentecostalists, the Innocentians and Murashkovites, who reputedly practice self-mutiliation and sometimes fast unto death.[3] But these intractable enthusiasts are few in number compared, for instance, with the Orthodox, who live orderly lives, render unto Caesar, and are regularly assured by their clergy that the Soviet system, far from contradicting Christ's message, is in some sense a fulfillment of it. Why, then, should the party want to bully these and other sedate churchgoers into renouncing their faith before it evaporates, as the party claims it will?

For one thing, the Soviet state is by nature irritable. Any foreign body sets up in it an intolerable itch which sooner or later must be relieved by a violent scratch. To Soviet official-

СЕКТАНТСКИЙ ПРОПОВЕДНИК: — Перед богом мы все равны!

Рисунок О. КАЛЛАСА (г. Таллин

SECTARIAN PREACHER: "We are all equal before God!"

—*From* Krokodil *(Moscow), January 20, 1964.*

[2] See article by V. Chashnikov, in *O nekotorykh osobennostiakh sovremennoi religioznoi ideologii*, Moscow, 1964; article by E. A. Karpovski, in *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 4, 1964; *Agitator*, Nos. 1 and 4, 1964; L. F. Ilichev, *"Formirovanie nauchnovo mirovozzrenia i ateisticheskoe vospitanie,"* in *Kommunist*, No. 1, 1964.

[3] *E.g.*, see I. A. Kryvelev, *Religii i tserkvi v sovremennom mire*, Moscow, 1961. According to one of a number of autobiographical sketches by ex-believers compiled in *My porvali s religiei* (Moscow, 1963), the Murashko sect was finally liquidated in 1959.

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dom generally, and more especially to the professional agitprop man, religion is often very irritating. It inevitably makes its adherents less amenable to the purposes of the regime. No matter how law-abiding and loyal to the state, the believer shudders when his child puts on the red kerchief of the Komsomol (though he may not go so far as the Baptists and call it "the Devil's mark"), and he certainly will try to keep the child out of an organization which would want him to disown his religious upbringing. But it is not just that religion, even in its least challenging forms, cannot help impinging on the authority of the regime; its prevalence also shows up the failure of the regime to fulfill for many of its subjects the promise on which its authority is supposed to rest—the promise to provide them with the good life. Millions of people still look to religion for the help and solace and reassurance that they cannot obtain, or think they cannot obtain, from the state or the "collective."

For many people everywhere, religion is a refuge from "the world," from a society which they, for whatever reason, dislike. It is, of course, infuriating to an exorbitant temporal power that some of its subjects find comfort in meditating on its transience, in squinting at its pretensions in the light of eternity. The theologians of present-day Orthodoxy "affirm that there are no contradictions between communism and Orthodoxy," but at the same time they "reduce communism to a matter of the 'external structure' of human existence," [4] thus making it "an insignificant social factor in comparison with the absolute and eternal teaching of Christ." Perhaps the attitude of the tiny splinter group calling itself "True Orthodox," which teaches outright hatred of the Communists, is less annoying to the party than that of the powerful parent church, which teaches that the Communists are not too bad but should not be taken too seriously.

The religious denominations are the only large and fairly coherent opposition groups in the Soviet Union offering varying degrees of resistance to certain official policies and openly preaching rival philosophies and sets of values. I once heard a leading Soviet ideologist tell a foreign scholar that there existed in the Soviet Union a "flourishing school of idealist philosophers" whom he identified, on request, as "the Orthodox Church." He was joking, but the jest underlines the fact that only the religious now make any sustained public challenge to the official ideology. Perhaps this would matter less, from the official point of view, if religion were confined to the uneducated. But while it is frequently stressed that "the vast majority of believers are semiliterates," we learn on occasion that "there are also intellectuals among them." [5]

These, then, are some of the reasons why L. F. Ilichev, head of the Ideological Commission, believes that "we cannot and do not have the right to wait for [religious] survivals to vanish without the action on them of our practical successes." [6] And it is quite clear that the official strategists now believe some of their past efforts to have been misconceived. Often they have lopped off all of the plant that shows, but left the roots to grow again, sometimes freakishly. The province of Kostroma had 800 churches before the Revolution and now has only 80.[7] At first sight, this seems a famous victory for militant atheism, but most of the dead churches were put out of action by force in the 1920's or by administrative harassment in later years. There is, moreover, no correlation in the Soviet Union between the number of believers in a locality and the number of places of worship. The Orthodox Christian whose church has been padlocked against him, or desecrated by being turned into a storehouse, stable or workshop, may continue to worship surreptitiously in a private house together with his correligionists, or quite often with the sectarians, who are well skilled in organizing such activities. Even if he no longer joins in congregational worship, he will very often continue to light the lamp before his ikons and will impart to his children what he can remember of the church's teaching. And all the while he will feel insulted and deprived and will resent the brutality of the state.

Besides these secret worshippers, there are very many Soviet citizens for whom vestigial religious trappings and observances—ikons, mezuzahs, ritual foods, christening or circumcision, religious weddings and burials, excursions to local shrines—have a nostalgic and semireligious charm even when they have ceased to be imperatives of conscience. Frequently one reads of "intellectuals," officials, even party members who, though they may

[4] See especially Y. A. Levada, *Sovremennoe Khristianstvo i sotsialnyi progress*, Moscow, 1962, and N. M. Skibitski's notice of this work, in *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 2, 1964.

[5] M. I. Shakhnovich, *O perezhitkakh mistitsizma*, in *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 2, 1964.

[6] Ilichev, *loc. cit.*

[7] Karpovski, *loc. cit.*

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think the teachings of religion ridiculous, connive at or even attend religious ceremonies, and who tolerate the accessories of religion in their homes as though they were just traditional domestic ornaments. As long as there are such people—*i.e.*, those who remain believers even though they have no place of worship, those who are in the "mixed and middle state" between belief and unbelief, and the Laodicean atheists who neither believe in nor fight against religion—the Communist educator's work is obviously far from done. Hence Ilichev's declaration that "the formation of a scientific outlook is our most urgent task. Its fulfillment demands, in particular, the furtherance of atheistic education by all possible means." [8]

Many of the excesses of Soviet agitprop campaigns are surely traceable to the feeling that whatever ideas people are abandoning, or half-abandoning, they are not firmly adopting a consistent Marxist-Leninist world view instead. To encounter in a work of anti-religious propaganda [9] the chapter-heading "Agnosticism in the Service of Modern Orthodoxy" is to be reminded that nothing less than total mental surrender can satisfy the Communist ideologue. Looking around him, he finds not only that religion is still vigorous, but that where it has been cut down a degenerate growth has sometimes sprung up in the same soil. The Soviet pundits are not the first to find that when traditional faiths are shown the door superstition flies in at the window.

At a more sophisticated level, imported religious fads or homegrown religio-scientific fantasies may move into minds emptied of their old faith. Thus Yoga, spiritualism, and white magic have been heard of lately in Leningrad. One well-known anti-religious professional, reporting these phenomena, also views with alarm the recent currency of stories about "flying saucers," of the hypothesis that Biblical accounts of miraculous ascents to and descents from heaven are in fact garbled records of visits from outer space, and even of "the legend of the Abominable Snowman." [10] "In our circumstances," writes Shakhnovich, "such myths, although they may themselves contain no element of mysticism, nonetheless clear the way for it." The same writer goes on to report an extraordinary example of religio-scientific speculation:

In 1962 A. I. Grigoriev . . . sent to the Philosophical Faculty of Leningrad University a project for the foundation of a new religion. He argues that since "all things develop triadically," "we cannot stop at atheism, which is "only the antithesis of theism," and that therefore a "synthesis combining theism and atheism must be thought up". . .. in the light of dialectical materialism. God should be understood as a man living on some planet, but with milliards of years of evolutionary development behind him which have ensured him the attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, etc. Grigoriev accompanies his project for an "atheistic religion" with some absurd speculations on the mystical properties of numbers.

The cranky—or possibly humorous—Grigoriev is worth mentioning for two reasons. One is that Shakhnovich's deliberate choice of a particularly absurd example of religio-philosophic speculation leads one to wonder whether other such exercises, more intelligently conceived and rigorously conducted, are not quite common. If they are, they would obviously testify to a serious speculative interest in religion among the Soviet intelligentsia. But whether the answer to this question is yes or no, one other observation needs to be made: namely, that this sort of thing surely cannot be of the slightest real concern to the Soviet authorities. Shakhnovich is plainly making work for himself. Piety, ideological vacillations, and mere crankiness may, as I have suggested, genuinely irritate the professional zealot. But we can be sure, too, that for professional reasons he will exaggerate his irritation. The Ideological Commission, once established, had to justify its existence by doughty deeds on all the well-trampled ideological fronts, including that of scientific atheism. This, of course, does not make the onslaught any easier for the religious to bear. But no one should infer from the violence of the campaign that religion is in fact a serious political or social problem from the point of view of Soviet officialdom—with the exception perhaps of some inquisitors.

This, however, is not to suggest that the war on religion has no serious political objective. It may be, as much as anything, a way of generating and channeling support for an officially decreed purpose and thus encouraging feelings of identification with the regime. Young people in particular have become rather bored with the regime's exhortations to worka-

[8] Ilichev, *loc. cit.*
[9] Gordienko, Nosovich, and Kharakhorkin, *Sovremennoe pravoslavie i yevo ideologia*, Moscow, 1963.
[10] Shakhnovich, *loc. cit.*

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day virtue, with its stereotyped self-congratulation and its nebulous promises, and it may be hoped that they will respond better if they are shown an enemy—a picturesque one at that—and a host of benighted fellow beings to be rescued. (For while religion is to be crushed, the religious are to be cherished—or, according to some sources, the religious rank-and-file are to be cherished, but not the incorrigible fanatics. We shall see below that there is cause for misgiving as to how this works in practice.)

Some Western readers of the egregious T. K. Kichko have wondered for whom exactly his book [11] was intended since, as one commentator observes, very few Jews read Ukrainian. But the Soviet press has often told us that believers do not go to anti-religious lectures, and we may suppose that they are not major consumers of anti-religious literature either. Some 70,000 "agitator-conversationalists" were recently mobilized in the Ukraine; [12] and Kichko's book was published in 12,000 copies. There can be little doubt where most of them were intended to go.

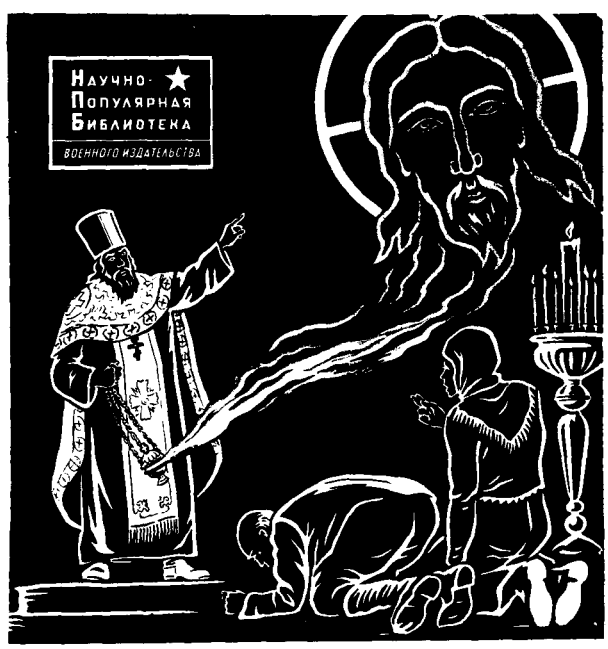
The principle was laid down long ago—and re-emphasized in "Khrushchev's Decree" of 1954 [13]—that the fight against religion must be conducted by education and persuasion, without crude administrative pressures and without offense to the susceptibilities of believers. But in practice the rules have been loosely interpreted. The Soviet press has publicized a large number of cases in which a local anti-religious drive was climaxed by the closing of a place of worship and the flight of its discomfited incumbents. The following shows the process at its most democratic and "spontaneous":

The synagogue ceased its activity, and its premises were turned into a recreation hall. This was preceded by extensive explanatory work among the believers. We began from the leadership, the ruling twenty elders. After the members of the ruling group had been persuaded that the further existence of the congregation was inexpedient, we used some of them to influence the rest of the believers. The whole congregation was then divided into groups, and each group was taken care of by agitators. As soon as the ruling twenty had signed an announcement of their resignation, it was comparatively easy to convince the rank-and-file of the congregation.[14]

There is no need to spell out the many questions that this narrative raises. But it should perhaps be made clear that if the members of a congregation which had been disbanded in this fashion were to continue worshiping together in some other place, they might be charged with breaking the law since "ministers of religion do not have the right to open churches, mosques or houses of prayer on their own initiative, without the express permission of the organs of state power, nor . . . to hold prayer meetings in buildings not specifically designed for that purpose." [15] Nor would it be safe for the priest, presbyter, rabbi or mullah to canvass for support. If he were to visit members of his flock in their homes for this purpose, he would be infringing the law against conducting religious propaganda outside places of worship, for which the penalty might be severe.

Although in theory only moral pressures may be brought to bear on the religious, the press occasionally refers, disapprovingly, to strong-arm methods which have miscarried. For instance, the Krasnograd Ispolkom, after highhandedly ordering the demolition of a prayer-house in the interests of urban development, was criticized for "trying to extinguish a fire with petrol." Its hasty action had only

[11] T. K. Kichko, *Yudaizm bez prikas*, Kiev, 1963.
[12] I. Brazhnik, in *Partinaia zhizn*, No. 24, 1963.
[13] Order of the CPSU Central Committee of November 1954.
[14] *Kommunist Moldavii*, No. 7, 1961.
[15] *Nauka i religia*, No. 9, 1961.



Above is the cover illustration of *Christianity, its Origin and Essence*, by N. N. Rosental, Moscow, 1960.

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made the believers "more fanatical," it was stated, and the government had had to restore (for how long?) their place of worship. In another case of premature closure, the believers were said to have "greatly obstructed us, and though we succeeded in taking away the furniture more or less peacefully, the last truck got away only after certain difficulties. The activist believers, more than sixty of them, began to shower the raiispolkom with demands . . . and what scurrilities did they not utter!" [16]

There is also evidence that administrative and social pressures are exerted on individuals as well as on communities. Thus, the Soviet periodical *Nauka i religia* has on various occasions condemned the practice of dismissing workers for their religious beliefs, but its disapproval was apparently based on expediency rather than elementary justice or humanity since it pointed out in one issue that an employed person "can be worked on at a meeting and threatened with dismissal." [17] We learn elsewhere that collectives contending for the title of "Brigade of Communist Labor" can earn marks by taking believers into their bosom and converting them.[18]

Ruthless interference in the family lives of believers is not only permitted but officially encouraged for the purpose of "saving" children from pernicious religious influences. "Freedom of conscience," a high Komsomol official declared, "applies only to adult citizens who are responsible for their acts. But no one can be allowed to cripple children spiritually, to exert pressure on their immature minds." [19] The authorities, said the Komsomol's official organ, must "step in" to protect children who become the "victims of spiritual and moral violence at the hands of their parents." [20]

It is, of course, a crime under existing Soviet legislation for a priest to give religious instruction to children, or to recruit them as choristers.[21] Technically parents are still allowed to take their children to a place of worship, but the Ideological Commission's 1963 decisions called for "intensified measures of control to protect children and adolescents from the influence of churchmen and from coercion at the hands of their parents to perform religious rites." Various practical steps in this direction have been reported, including Komsomol patrolling of places of worship in order to dissuade children from attending services, or to report those attending to the school authorities for special indoctrination.[22] In some cases (usually involving sectarians), children may even be taken away from their parents. One such case came to light when a young Leningrad worker named Malozemov was commended by Ilichev and others for acting to remove six of his younger brothers and sisters from the care of their parents, who were charged with nothing worse than being Baptists.[23] (The Ideological Commission, however, *did* think that a Minsk court had been overhasty in awarding custody of three children to their drunken father rather than their Baptist mother.)

Among the gentler methods of persuasion, formal public lectures are now regarded as unprofitable, but atheistic films, amateur comedy acts ridiculing the clergy and their ways, and evenings of "unmiraculous miracles" (in which the performer utterly discredits the thaumaturges of all time with such marvellous tricks as the apparent conversion of water into boiling milk) are all highly recommended. But perhaps the method which the authorities would like to see most widely adopted is that of tactful house-to-house agitation, working from a (tactfully compiled) local register of believers. The agitator should proceed cautiously, showing sympathy for the believer, giving him material help and moral support if necessary, not thrusting atheistic tracts on him too soon, but trying first to interest him in unprovocative secular literature and then gradually sowing doubt in his mind.

The literature on which the atheist agitator relies breaks down broadly into three levels—"scientific," semipopular, and popular. The authorities are beginning to recognize that much of it is too general and too old-fashioned. In the pragmatic manner characteristic of the Khrushchevian era, they now call for "a clear view of the extent and nature of religious beliefs in each particular area," [24] and also for attention to "contemporary religious literature" and (more important) to "the actual form in which belief in God manifests itself in the consciousness and behavior of the masses of believers." [25]

[16] *Ibid.*, No. 9, 1963.
[17] *Ibid.*
[18] *Agitator*, No. 1, 1964.
[19] S. P. Pavlov, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Komsomol, addressing a Komsomol Congress: see report in *Pravda*, April 17, 1962.
[20] *Molodoi Kommunist*, No. 9, 1959.
[21] *E.g.*, see *Sovetskaia Rossia*, Aug. 18, 1963.
[22] *Partinaia zhizn Kazakhstana*, No. 8, 1963.
[23] *Agitator*, No. 4, 1964.
[24] *Partinaia zhizn*, No. 24, 1963.
[25] P. N. Mitrokhin and E. A. Liagushkina, "Nekotorye cherty sovremennovo baptizma," in *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 2, 1964.

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It is unlikely, however, that these practical needs will be satisfactorily met unless there is first a great improvement in the techniques of the scientific study of religion and a considerable broadening of its scope. There has been, in the Soviet period, very little original anthropological research in the field of religion, and no inquiry at all, it seems, into the psychology of belief. Learned Soviet symposia on religion often resurrect works old enough to be museum pieces: it is surely rather remarkable that a fairly ambitious recent publication of the Academy of Sciences on Judaism [26] should include Sir James Frazer's musings on Exodus 34 ("Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk"), and that its best offering should be a piece by Orchansky (died 1875) on Hassidism. Antireligious classics are copiously reprinted. No doubt the poetic power of Lucretius can still help to create a Godless mood, however quaint his arguments seem; but could anyone except a professional historian of ideas endure, for instance, Holbach? [27]

Similarly, Soviet critiques of the Jewish, Christian and Moslem scriptures are largely parasitical on foreign—and sometimes, from the scientific rationalist's point of view, obsolete—sources. A better than average example of the genre, I. Kryvelev's *Kniga o biblii* (Book about the Bible) [28]—is based almost entirely on Western (rationalist or modern Christian) Biblical scholarship, ranging from Spinoza through Robertson, Wellhausen and Delitsch to Holscher and C. H. Dodd. Such studies follow well-established lines, setting out to show the relatively late origin, purely human authorship, and all-too-human motivation of the scriptures, with a glance at the indebtedness of Jewish—and hence of Moslem and Christian—tradition to earlier Eastern systems of belief. Many Britons will find much of Kryvelev nostalgically familiar, having first heard it in boyhood from a teacher in holy orders as part of a course in Religious Knowledge.

At the semipopular and popular levels, poking fun at the Old Testament is a flourishing industry. The seminal work is E. Yaroslavski's *Biblia dlya veruyushchikh i neveruyushchikh* (Bible for Believers and Unbelievers), originally written in 1922 and reprinted again in an eleventh edition of 850,000 copies in 1962. There was undoubtedly a time when Yaroslavski's jokes about the discrepancies in the Old Testament, the comicality of its cosmogony, the eccentricities of its deity, and the uncouthness of its leading personages would have scandalized most pious Jews and Christians and reinforced any free-thinking velleity. But, for want of information on the "beliefs actually held" in the Soviet Union, we can have no idea who, except atheists, would be affected one way or another by, let us say, "the sacred history of the Jewish priest and his concubine who was cut into twelve pieces and was the occasion of the almost total destruction of the tribe of Benjamin."

As a rule, the most offensive antireligious literature of the "scientific" and semipopular varieties is that directed against Roman Catholicism. There are perhaps two reasons for this. First, the Soviet writings in this field draw heavily upon—though they do not outdo—western European anti-clerical literature, mediaeval and modern. Secondly, we should be evading an unpleasant truth if we did not note the persistence of an anti-Catholic animus which in Russia antedates communism. The typical anti-Catholic tract (Sheinman's brochure [29] is a good example) dwells lovingly on the decadence of the Papal court in the Middle Ages and its alleged corruption in our own times, on the Inquisition, the Church's "persecution of science," witch hunts, the traffic in indulgences, the "fabrication of saints, miracles and holy relics," the "usurious commercial activities of the Holy See," the "alliance of the Vatican with fascism," and so on. It also plays upon Russian patriotic themes, such as the "subversive activity" of the Vatican in Russia in the late 16th and early 17th centuries and "the Papacy's alliance with the Turkish sultans."

The official Soviet view, no doubt, is that such works are offensive only to the clergy, but of course devout laymen must also be hurt by attacks on institutions and persons whom they feel bound to respect. In any case, it is not always easy for the propagandist to maintain the pretense of distinguishing between the "professional religious" and the rank-and-file. Some sectarians, the Baptists for instance, with their doctrine of universal priesthood, pose a problem. And the special character of the Jewish religious community is one reason why anti-Judaic literature often attacks not just the

[26] M. S. Belenki (ed.), *Kritika yudeiskoi religii*, Moscow, 1962.

[27] Baron Paul Heinrich Holbach was an 18th-century French philosopher and author of two much-debated anti-religious works, *Christianisme dévoilé* (1767) and *Le système de la nature* (1770).

[28] Moscow, 1959.

[29] M. M. Sheinman, *Paptsvo*, Moscow, 1961.

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rabbinate and the synagogue servants, but all practicing Jews.

Beyond question the most vicious anti-religious book of recent years is T. K. Kichko's *Iudaizm bez prikras* (Judaism Without Embellishment), published in 1963. Even its outer cover administers a physical shock, illustrated as it is by the first of a profusion of "anti-Judaic" or, more accurately, anti-semitic caricatures undistinguishable in many cases from those produced by the Nazi Jew-baiters of the 1930's. This seems to be an unusual feature in specialized anti-religious literature, although precedents can easily be found in the Soviet provincial press.

Kichko's points are drawn from the professional atheist's common stock: religion is, above all, a ruthless swindle, and its ministers are greedy charlatans; religion degrades women, sets up barriers of prejudice and hatred between peoples, and so on. Kichko does not add an original stroke to the conventional picture; he merely lays on his colors a little thicker.[30] Thus, inspired no doubt by the press treatment of "economic crimes" involving Jews, he represents the synagogue as, above all, a thieves' kitchen. And writing on the doctrine of "The Chosen People," he is not content with referring to the usual *locus classicus* in Exodus, but distorts a Talmudic gloss to mean that the Jews have a divine right to exploit and rob other peoples.

To an outsider, some of the simpler popular literature looks shrewder and more telling than the heavyhanded "scientific" works. There

[30] In addition to works already cited, mention may be made of A. Yeryshev, *Religia—vrag ravnopravia i druzhby narodov*, Kiev, 1962 (from the same publishing house as T. K. Kichko's earlier-mentioned book).

An Example of Soviet Anti-Catholic Propaganda

The picture at top right originally appeared in the March 1, 1959, issue of the Catholic periodical *Informations Catholiques Internationales* (Paris), as an illustration to an article describing the "decisive" part played by Cuban Catholics in the revolution against Batista. The caption reads: "Picture from the Liberation: A curious priest perched atop a passing tank whose name he may not have noticed!" Below right is the same picture as reproduced (in obviously doctored form) on p. 177 of I. A. Kryvelev's *Religii i tserkvi v sovremennom mire*, a Soviet anti-religious work published in 1961. The Russian caption reads: "A Catholic priest in the army of Batista on an American tank bearing an emblem of the devil and the inscription 'Lucifer.' Photo from the journal *Informations Catholiques Internationales*, 1960."

Image de la Liberation
Un prêtre curieux est grimpé sur un char de passage dont il n'a peut-être pas vu le nom !

Католический священник в войсках диктатора Батисты на американском танке с эмблемой дьявола и надписью «Люцифер». Фото из журнала «Informations Catholigues Internationales», 1960 год.

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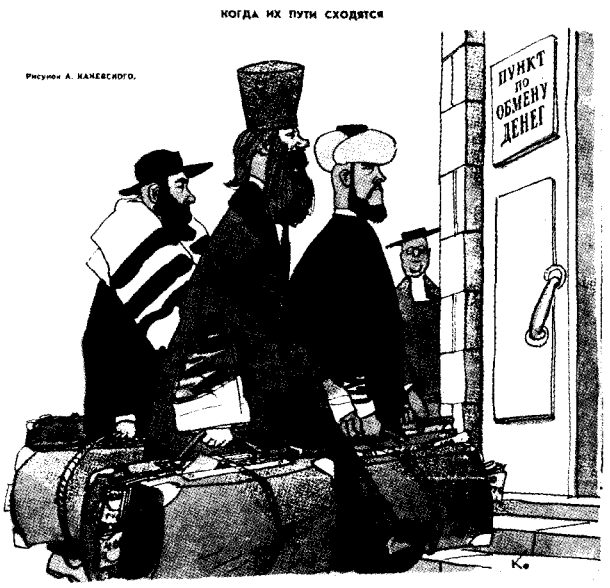

Caption above: "When Their Paths Meet."
Sign on door: "Center for Money Change."

—*From* **Krokodil** *(Moscow), January 20, 1961.*

are, for instance, a number of cleverly-written pamphlets and articles which gently and humorously quiz the believer about his funny, old-fashioned and illogical religious practices. Those addressed to the Jews are particularly interesting and seem to owe a good deal to Yiddish literary tradition.[31] Propaganda of this kind is no doubt intended mainly for the semi-believer who may be fairly easily teased into breaking with religion altogether.

A favorite genre with popular anti-religious writers is scandal-mongering about the clergy.[32] Much of the material is provided—and a good deal of it written up—by former priests, pastors, rabbis and mullahs. It is surprising how these high-minded citizens managed to endure, in some cases for many years and very profitably, their association with colleagues who "lead a shut-in life bounded by food, drink, church services, scandal and money-grubbing," who "instead of increasing their knowledge . . . strive to 'outspit' one another [by boasting] about the sums they earn"; who try to outdo each other not in the number of books they read but in the "number of tots they drink." The clergy (of all denominations) are accused of profligate habits. "In every new parish he set himself up with mistresses."[33] The Bishop of Astrakhan and Stalingrad has figured frequently in anti-religious writings since 1959, when he was accused in the press[34] of cohabiting with "adopted daughters" and "nieces" especially recruited by a local monk. Sodomy is said to be rife in Catholic and Orthodox monasteries.[35]

The most lovingly elaborated tales, however, are of rapacity and cynicism. To quote a few examples:[36] "I will not hide from my readers that I [an ex-priest] got from two to fourteen thousand rubles (old currency) a month." "Father Ioann uses the money he gets like a real businessman. . . . Not content with one house, he soon acquires another at a cost of 35,000 rubles. . . . God's servant Ioann laughs at such 'behests' of Christ as 'Lay up no treasure in this world'—his whole faith consists in his urge to get rich by fraud." [Father] Pavel Ivanov said to me, "I don't believe in God because he does not exist, but for money I am prepared to serve the devil." "He had a capacious pocket sewn inside his vestments . . . and during 'divine' service surreptitiously tucked away money from the collection plate." "Teper [chairman of a Jewish community] demanded from the grief-stricken husband 3,000 rubles for burying her [his deceased wife]." "The priests, 'nothing doubting,' take the offerings [in kind] of the faithful, which they themselves have sanctified with prayer and the smoke of incense, and feed them to their pigs." And so on without end.

For the benefit of Soviet Catholics (mostly Lithuanians and Poles), the Roman curia is subjected to the same sort of vilification. Lavretski's *Kardinaly idut v ad* (Cardinals Go to Hell) is the most striking recent example and should be noted particularly for its no-nonsense treatment of Pope John XXIII (at a time when the Communist press generally was showing a certain cautious friendliness toward him) and also for its illustrations, which are a more skillful application of the visual shock tactics used by Kichko.

We may be sure that persistent denigration

[31] A good example is H. Altshuler, *Spor v Yudeiskii novyi god,* Moscow, 1961. See also Aron Lapidus, "Kak ya khoronil diadiu Natana," in *My porvali s religiei,* cited above.

[32] The main sources for this paragraph are: the sketches contained in *My porvali . . . op. cit.;* A. B. Yakushevich, *Razdumye o vere,* Moscow, 1961; and I. Lavretski, *Kardinaly idut v ad,* Moscow, 1961.

[33] Yakushevich, describing an ex-colleague, *op. cit.*

[34] *Pravda Ukrainy,* July 3, 1959, and *Sovetskaia Rossia,* July 11, 1959.

[35] *E.g.,* see *Sovetskaia Litva,* Oct. 10, 1959.

[36] Quoted from *My porvali . . .* and Yakushevich, *op. cit.*

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of this sort has its effect, at least on those of feeble faith. Some of the "unmaskings" reported are probably quite genuine since no religious denomination, any more than any other human institution, can keep itself entirely free of rogues and charlatans. But the wholesale denunciations which we find in Soviet anti-religious literature would tax the credulity of most hardened secularists. Those attacked are, of course, given no chance to defend themselves.[37] Perhaps the more thoughtful Soviet citizen, adept in judicious reading, often gives them the benefit of the doubt, but against this we may suppose that the very blatancy of the professional apostates helps to bring religion into disrepute. Whether the reader of Yakushevich, for example, thinks, "What scoundrels Orthodox priests are!" or merely, "So this wretch was an Orthodox priest," Ilichev has scored a small victory.

No popular anti-religious work is complete without charges of treason, past and present. Some denominations—notably the Catholics and Jehovah's Witnesses—are represented in current Soviet propaganda as instruments of imperialist subversion. Most religious groups (including, in Kichko's farrago, even the Jews) are accused of collaboration with the Nazi invaders during the Second World War.

The religious cannot, of course, enter into detailed polemics with their assailants even if they wished to do so. The Baptists, it is true, are reported to have experimented with the presentation, in dramatized form, of an argument between a believer and an atheist critic of the Bible,[38] but this seems to have been an isolated counterpropaganda enterprise. As a rule, the religious can reply only indirectly and in general terms. They, or at any rate the denominations which deign to argue, tirelessly insist that there is no incompatibility between religious belief on the one hand and modern science or Soviet social ideals on the other.[39] Ilichev has called for special efforts to refute these contentions.

It will probably not be the most rigorous Soviet thinkers, however, who attempt to validate, by argument or demonstration, the conviction casually adopted by millions of laymen that science has somehow demolished religion. The scientific atheist in the Soviet Union is nowadays often guilty of crudities scarcely distinguishable from those which he could previously impute to some clergymen. A Moscow churchman, for instance, once opposed the construction of an underground railway for fear that it might debouch on the corridors of hell, but this is really no sillier than the triumphant conclusions drawn by militant atheists from the fact that Soviet cosmonauts have found no "firmament" and met no angels.

Much the same can be said of some Western well-wishers of the Soviet regime, whose views have perhaps caused even their Soviet friends a little—though probably purely literary—embarrassment. The former Dean of Canterbury, for instance, is quoted[40] as holding that "if the Soviet regime rejects the name of Christianity, it is only because in Tsarist Russia this name had become the antithesis of the teaching and ideas of Christ." The ordinary Soviet believer, no doubt, will consult his experience and his conscience, rather than the Dean or his critics, as to whether religious belief is compatible with good citizenship.

The efforts of the religious to reach a *modus vivendi,* or rather a truce, with Soviet science and Soviet social ideals, and their modifications of certain practices (for instance, in the case of the Orthodox Church, the relaxation of rules concerning fasts and holidays of obligation, the acceptance of group confession, and the admission of women to the altar), are represented as signs of conscious weakness, desperate concessions to modernity, and renunciations of positions previously regarded as sacrosanct. But it is, perhaps, not in itself a very good argument against religion that, like everything else, it evolves.

The Soviet atheistic literature of recent years suggests a wistful preference for religion in its older and cruder forms, together with an awareness that the older and cruder forms of atheistic propaganda are no longer adequate. Indeed, militant atheists might ask themselves whether the old forms of antireligious work were not always counterproductive. For the Soviet Union, on the evidence of its anti-religious literature, is still a long, long way from that deliverance, promised in *Das Kapital,* when religion will vanish because "the practical relationships of everyday life express themselves in clear and rational connections between people, and between people and nature."

[37] The Archbishop of Tashkent, for instance, was denied the opportunity to answer accusations that had been published in *Pravda vostoka;* on this case, see *Zhurnal Moskovskoi Patriarkhii,* No. 10, 1960.

[38] Mitrokhin and Liagushkina, *op. cit.*

[39] See especially articles by V. E. Ladorenko and M. V. Demin, in *O nekotorykh osobennostiakh . . . , op. cit.*

[40] By Demin, *op. cit.*

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Judaism with Embellishment

By Jacques Fernier

One of the most significant recent phenomena on the Soviet domestic scene has been the massive and virulent campaign against all forms of religious belief. Yet, except for its anti-Judaic—or often simply anti-Jewish—aspects, this campaign, which was launched in 1963, has received relatively little attention in the West; for Westerners, understandably enough, have been interested chiefly in those phases of Soviet life which most affect the West itself, such as the state of the Soviet economy, high politics in the Kremlin, or foreign policy. In similar fashion, the aspect of the current anti-religious campaign which has been most widely commented upon in the West, namely anti-Judaism, is the one which is of most direct concern to significant groups outside the Soviet Union—in this instance the Western Jewish community and Western liberals of various sorts, anxious about the problem of anti-semitism at home.

A historical factor no doubt reinforces this tendency in the West: since antisemitism was one of the most appalling aspects of that great 20th-century relapse into barbarism, National Socialism, it is only natural that civilized men everywhere should be particularly sensitive to its resurgence anywhere and under any guise. Furthermore, yet another and different motive has probably played a role in focusing the spotlight on Soviet anti-Judaism: it had become evident to some ardent anti-Communists that if the Soviet regime can be convicted of antisemitism, it can also be equated with tsarism in its worst periods and perhaps even Nazism, and that communism can thus be stripped in still another respect of that false aura of "progressivism" it assumes in order to seduce naive idealists the world over. Without at all suggesting that antisemitism is not involved in Soviet anti-Judaism, it should be pointed out that counterpropaganda of this particular sort, designed to demonstrate the retrograde character of the Soviet regime, is hardly more enlightening than the just-plain-propaganda of the Soviet sort, designed to prove the progressive nature of the Communist order.

The preceding article by Mr. Willetts fortunately provides a very useful corrective to many of these deficiencies. Mr. Willetts scrupulously documents the full range of the current anti-religious campaign in the Soviet Union; he probes the possible motives of the government in promoting this campaign; and he catalogues convincingly the arguments used and the anti-religious appeals made. In addition, his research clearly indicates that the anti-

Mr. Fernier is the pseudonym of a French Catholic writer and journalist who has visited the Soviet Union and who is personally acquainted with many of its leading writers and intellectuals.

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Judaic campaign is not different, whether in intensity, in nature, or in the crude demagogy and intellectual primitivism of the arguments employed, from the Soviet campaigns against Orthodoxy, Catholicism, or Islam. He thus properly places the phenomenon in its total political context, for the fact that the Soviet government is equally opposed to all religions *qua* religions, and hence persecutes each of them in roughly the same manner, is the indispensable point of departure in understanding the current anti-religious campaign.

Still, a few additional remarks on this complex subject, based in part on personal observation, may be appropriate. To begin with, it should be noted that while the Soviet state is equally hostile to all forms of religion as such, this hostility of *principle* is reenforced and colored by different *political* concerns in the case of each individual denomination; for the specific, practical problems posed for the Soviet authorities by the various religious groups differ notably in both their nature and importance. Thus Catholicism—as Mr. Willetts indicates—is the butt of some of the crudest and most offensive attacks, in part perhaps because of an atavistic Russian hostility to the Latin West, but in part also, no doubt, because the tight hierarchical organization of the Catholic Church, its strongly marked international character, its considerable political influence, and its militantly anti-Communist stance make it seem an especially formidable rival to Moscow's own universalist pretentions. Yet as a practical matter, Catholicism poses a very limited internal problem to the Soviet Union (in effect only insofar as it is associated with the nationalism of the very small Lithuanian and Polish minorities), with the result that in this instance the regime's propaganda machine turns very largely in a void.

The situation of Islam in the Soviet Union, though superficially similar to that of Catholicism, is in reality rather different. On the one hand it presents more of an internal problem for the Soviet government than Catholicism because of its connection with the nationalism and communal clannishness of the fairly numerous Turkic peoples of Central Asia, the Caucusus, and other regions; on the other hand, however, though a universal faith like Catholicism, it possesses a much weaker hierarchal organization and international cohesiveness, and is really important only in the Arab countries, with which the Soviet government on the whole wishes to maintain good relations. Thus Soviet anti-Islamic propaganda is directed less toward Mohammedanism as a world faith than toward the uprooting of "superstition," nationalism, and Turkic communalism in some of the more backward portions of the Soviet Union.

The Orthodox Church, clearly, is in a very separate category from all other religious communities. Since it constitutes for the Soviet regime a problem without major international ramifications, it is chiefly objectionable *qua* religion. Yet this is enough to make it a source of major concern to the state: it not only represents the largest religious communion by far in the Soviet Union, but is, indeed, the mainstay of all "superstition" among the Russian masses, particularly among the peasant half of the population. As a result agitation against Orthodoxy and day-to-day harassment of its clergy and communicants are perhaps the most time-consuming, routine tasks of those charged with conducting the anti-religious campaign.

The numerically far less important religious sects, from the relatively mild Baptists to such extreme communities as the Jehovah's Witnesses, probably present a practical problem to the Soviet authorities that is more acute and certainly more baffling than that posed by Orthodoxy, for these sects are characterized by the highest degree of religious fervor, at times of fanatical zeal, of all the religious groups in the USSR. And what is even more important, this intensity of conviction is often channeled into non-cooperation, even civil disobedience, with respect to the state. Indeed, the sectarians represent the only clear-cut case of significant religious resistance to state authority in the Soviet Union, which the regime, given its pretensions to total control of society, cannot leave unanswered. For this reason, it is entirely plausible to suppose that the recent growth in the USSR of sectarian strength is the most important concrete cause of the whole current anti-religious campaign, for here in actual fact is a clear challenge to the Soviet concept of government.

Judaism, finally, in the eyes of the Soviet authorities, is also in a special category, and is probably second only to sectarianism as a practical concern. Judaism, however, does not appear menacing primarily as a form of "superstition," since a very high proportion, comparatively speaking, of the Soviet Jewish community is secularized, urbanized, and assimilated into modern Russian culture; rather, from the government's point of view, it is essentially the bearer of a political threat. This view arose in the wake of the Second World

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War when the Soviet authorities first began to associate Judaism at home with the active international force of Zionism, a force which in turn appeared closely linked to Russia's then arch-enemy, the United States, or at least to the powerful and affluent American Jewish community. Moreover, it was noted that an exceptionally high percentage of the Soviet Jewish community had "relatives abroad," often in the same hostile United States—a fact that was officially considered damning in the biography of any citizen, of whatever religious background. In short, the Jews were deemed, by the very nature of their situation, to be either potentially or actually "unpatriotic." Since the death of Stalin, of course, these suspicions have been significantly attenuated; yet they have far from disappeared even at the present time, as demonstrated both by the Soviet government's continuing hostility to Zionism abroad and its distrust of Jewish cultural activities at home.

Now there is obviously much more mythology than fact in this assessment by the Soviet government of its Jewish "problem"—much more so, indeed, than in its evaluation of the sectarian danger. The claim that Soviet Jews are disloyal "agents of imperialism" is warranted by nothing in their actual behavior either before or after Stalin. If a large percentage of the functionaries of the Soviet "establishment," both under Stalin and since, sincerely believe in the Jewish "menace" to the integrity of the Soviet way of life, it is in part because these men were caught up in the wave of chauvinism generated by the war, and in part because the Jews, though not subversive of the established order on account of their foreign contacts, often were in fact "subversive" on account of a covert liberalism.

This syndrome of integral nationalist and anti-liberal suspicions with respect to the Jews is, clearly, a familiar one in recent history, and Soviet liberals of the post-Stalin era frequently refer to it (in private conversation, of course) as "our fascism" or "Soviet McCarthyism." Given the prevalence of such thinking in much of the Soviet hierarchy, moreover, any attack on Judaism obviously is directed less against a particular form of religious "superstition" than against the notion of an international Jewish cultural community, and hence against Jewishness as such. Whether founded on reality or not, the political motive in official Soviet anti-Judaism is no doubt the primary one. Furthermore, it is only in the case of Judaism that a religious community coincides with a single ethnic or cultural group, thereby automatically giving to anti-Judaic propaganda an extra-religious, social focus absent in all other cases (with the partial exception of Islam and the Turkic population of the Soviet Union). The result of such a focus is, and can only be, that the line between anti-Judaism and anti-semitism is thin almost to the point of imperceptibility.

The fact, then, is that anti-Judaism is essentially a political effort designed to destroy the sense of ethnic and cultural community among Soviet Jews, both as a group within Soviet society and as a branch of the world Jewish community. Hence, although roughly the same arguments and techniques of persecution are employed against all religions in Soviet Russia, the results can only be different according to the nature and the situation in Soviet society of each individual religious community. The practical consequence of this is that those groups whose characteristics are most at variance with the aims of the Soviet state are the groups which suffer most. Thus, the sectarians, as the group whose religion entails internal political consequences which are the most incompatible with the Soviet order, suffer the most severe religious persecution: and similarly, the Jews, as the group whose religion implies, or can be construed as implying, international political connections that are the most incompatible with the pretensions of the Soviet state, suffer the greatest harassment as a cultural and ethnic entity.

The practical consequences of the Soviet anti-religious campaign, however, are not determined solely by the intentions and aims of the government; they are governed equally as much by the reactions of the population to this propaganda, by the popular predisposition to hostility towards one or another religious community. And here the reactions of the population tend to reenforce the pattern of discrimination stemming from the political motivation of the government.

Thus, the attitude of the majority of European Russians towards Orthodoxy reflects a fair amount of anti-clericalism in the form of an aversion to the reputedly dirty and venal *pop*, as well as a rather widespread incredulity with respect to all supernatural claims—sentiments which find expression, without any encouragement from the regime, in attempts by young "hooligans" to harass the semi-public religious celebrations of Easter and Christmas. Yet, on the other hand, for most European Russians Orthodoxy is to a degree respectable because it is familiar, traditional, and national. Very large numbers of people have their chil-

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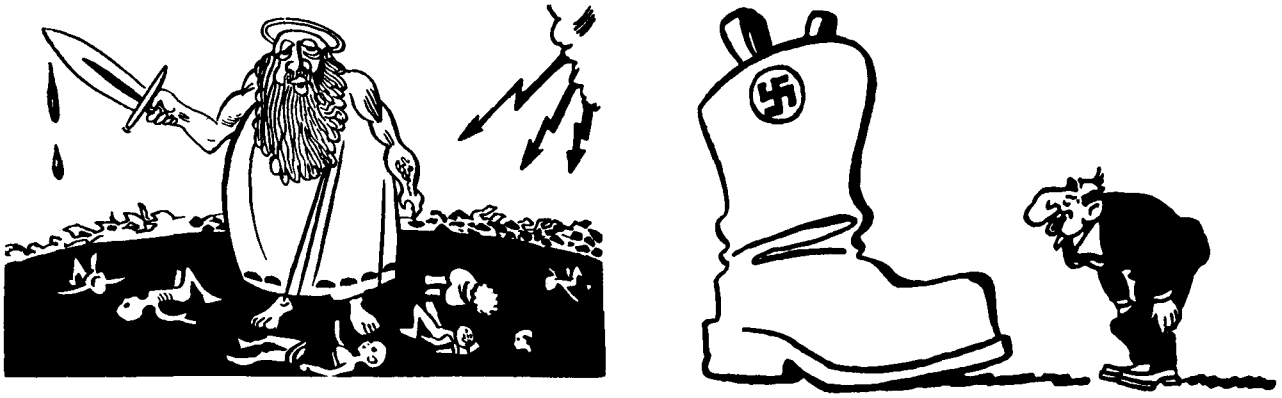
"SCIENTIFIC" ANTI-JUDAISM



ГОСПОДЬ ПОРАЗИВ УСІХ ПЕРВІСТКІВ НА ЗЕМЛІ ЄГИПЕТСЬКІЙ

В РОКИ ГІТЛЕРІВСЬКОЇ ОКУПАЦІЇ ВЕРХОВОДИ-СІОНІСТИ ПРИСЛУЖУВАЛИ ФАШИСТАМ

Left: "The Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt."
Right: "In the years of Hitlerite occupation the Zionist bosses served the Fascists."

—*Illustrations from* Judaism without Embellishment, *by T. K. Kichko, pp. 137 and 161 respectively.*

dren baptized and seek the consolations of the Church on their death-beds; many people approve of religious marriage, even though they do not often dare risk the official opprobrium and penalties it entails; most villages celebrate two saint's days a year, as well as Easter and Christmas, if often only by festivities that are more pagan than Christian; and virtually everyone, party members included, observes the eve of the "old New Year" (January 13) with a rousing and well-lubricated feast. Obviously, in such a context, the government's campaign against Orthodoxy cannot and does not evoke a keen popular response.

With respect to the sectarians, however, the situation is significantly different. These groups, especially the more radical among them, awaken in the average Soviet citizen the antipathy reserved in most societies for zealous, self-righteous—or, if one prefers, "fanatical"—sects, which moreover consciously and deliberately set themselves apart from the rest of the population in closed sub-societies. At best he looks upon them as odd or eccentric, at worst as positively anti-social, unpatriotic, and dangerous. Even those qualities of the sectarians which evoke a grudging admiration—their probity, their love of hard work, their sobriety, their fraternal cohesiveness—irritate as much as they impress the ordinary, less virtuous mortal. Thus the government's campaign against the sectarians receives by and large the support of a fair proportion of the population.

The same is true of the regime's campaign against Judaism, although of course for different reasons. In this case, it is not enough to say that the anti-Judaic pronouncements of official agitators are interpreted by the population as incitements to anti-Jewish sentiments and actions because of the persistence of a traditional and inveterate Russian antisemitism, although there is obviously some truth in this observation. What is much more important is the fact that in the early 1960's all anti-Judaic propaganda is, and can only be, read in the light, first, of the policies of official antisemitism (as opposed to anti-Judaism) in the period of late Stalinism, and secondly, of the fluctuating fortunes of destalinization under Khrushchev.

Most reflective and informed Soviet citizens are agreed that antisemitism, at least as an active force in Russian life, virtually disappeared in the years between 1917 and the German invasion of 1941. It was only during the war that popular antisemitism began to revive—probably because of the all-too-human, if irrational, feeling that since Hitler persecuted the Jews the Russians were fighting the war for the sake of the Jews, and hence that the sufferings of the Russian people were somehow the Jews' fault. After the war, the government quite consciously and deliberately sought

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to exploit this new antisemitism, at first only indirectly and to a limited extent under Andrei Zhdanov from 1946 through 1948, then much more markedly and explicitly in the "anti-cosmopolitan" campaign launched in 1949, and most blatantly of all in the "doctor's plot" on the eve of Stalin's death in 1953. The aims of the regime in this enterprise were no doubt varied: to find a convenient focus of popular hatred in the period of postwar reconstruction; to stimulate anti-Western and particularly anti-American sentiment for purposes of the cold war by associating the nebulous foreign enemy with the more readily identifiable "cosmopolitan traitor" at home; to discredit all liberal and Westward-looking elements within the Soviet Union by associating them with a reputedly unpatriotic international Jewish conspiracy compounded of Zionism, the Joint Distribution Committee, the United States, and all those too numerous "relatives abroad" of the Soviet Jews. Thus, by the time of the dictator's death, antisemitism had come to be—along with police terror, the labor camps, and the "cult of personality"—a major and inseparable ingredient of Stalinism; moreover, antisemitism was that element of the system designed to mobilize popular support for Stalinist policies as a whole.

Consequently, once Khrushchev began to destalinize in 1956, the struggle against antisemitism automatically became one of the major issues of the day for all reforming, "liberal" elements in Soviet society—and this despite the fact that the regime would have preferred quietly to drop the "anti-cosmopolitan" campaign without, however, openly denouncing it. Concomitantly, and just as automatically, the covert defense of a mitigated antisemitism, in the name of Soviet patriotism, became a major rallying cry of that numerous "establishment" of functionaries who had been closely associated with the execution of the more unsavory of the late dictator's policies (the group whom Yevtushenko in 1962 baptized the "heirs of Stalin") and who could not permit the process of destalinization to go so far as to touch them or their positions. Indeed, after 1956, and especially after 1961, the question of antisemitism became one of the principal issues in the politics of destalinization. The camp system and mass terror could be (and were) abolished by administrative action in the years between 1953 and 1956. The cult of personality of the living Stalin gradually ceased to be a reality after its object's death, and it could be destroyed as an official pious memory by Khrushchev's denunciations in 1956 and 1961. But antisemitism, a diffuse social phenomenon which the authorities made use of for their own ends, was more difficult to wipe out, and it remained, among the Stalinist inheritances, a political problem only second in importance to the issue of "fathers and sons" (a euphemism for designating the muted civil war between those who had been old enough to hold positions of responsibility under Stalin and those who came to maturity only after his death). Not that "anti-cosmopolitanism" was *actively* preached under Khrushchev: rather, it was never denounced explicitly, as were the camps and Stalin himself. It is significant that to the present day antisemitism is the only important pillar of Stalinism whose very existence the regime has never admitted.

As such, it remains a bone in the throat of the liberal intelligentsia, of the former victims of Stalin, and of the generation of the "sons"—in short, of all those elements that make up what might be called the party of movement in the Soviet society. This group quite rightly considers that antisemitism remains a major component of the anti-liberal and xenophobic ideology of the "fathers," of the Stalinist-Zhdanovite "black hundreds," and of "dogmatists" of all sorts—or what might be termed the party of resistance to movement in Soviet life—a group whose members still occupy a preponderant number of positions of power and prestige at all echelons in Soviet society. For the party of movement, therefore, the active struggle against antisemitism is a major aspect of the struggle for the complete destalinization of Soviet life and for the definitive elimination of the "fathers" from all positions of influence and importance. Conversely, for the party of resistance, denial of the fact of antisemitism, whether past or present, refusal to take measures to combat it, and covert encouragement of it are major devices for defending the semi-Stalinist *status quo*.

As for the government (at least under Khrushchev), it has maneuvered between these two forces, on the one hand refraining from any further "anti-cosmopolitan" agitation, yet on the other refusing to challenge directly the antisemitism of numerous segments of its bureaucratic apparatus for fear of unduly disorganizing the cadres over what is, in official eyes, only a minor matter. Thus the party of resistance is able to argue, with some prospect of being listened to at court, that the agitation against antisemitism is the work of a few self-seeking and ambitious Jews, and to allege as evidence for this opinion the unde-

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niable prominence of Jewish intellectuals in the liberal camp. What is more important still, the neo-Stalinists can plausibly assert that to admit the existence of antisemitism in the Soviet Union, even if only before 1953, would be to accept the equation of Stalinism with Hitlerism, and hence to defame socialism and the Soviet state, to degrade Soviet patriotism, and to play into the hands of the foreign foe. It is because of the prevalence of this mentality in the Soviet "establishment" that Yevtushenko's "Babii Yar," for example, created such a furor; for this poem was in effect a liberal tract denouncing Soviet antisemitism in the guise of an attack on German antisemitism, and thereby presuming to force the government to take a stand on an issue it had always deliberately ignored. As a result, it was roundly castigated by the "black hundreds" as a calumny against all patriotic sons of Russia, and ultimately the editor of *Literaturnaia gazeta*, Kosolapov, was dismissed for having published it (among other sins).

In such a charged political context, anti-Judaism, when officially promoted by the Soviet government, obviously means something more than an attack on just another form of "superstition." To the party of resistance in the administrative *apparat*, anti-Judaism is no doubt a means of continuing, albeit in muted form, the now forbidden campaign against "rootless cosmopolitans." To the population at large, particularly the less cultivated strata of workers and peasants, an anti-Judaic harangue by a party agitator is almost certainly indistinguishable from antisemitic exhortation pure and simple. For, if one is to believe liberal Soviet intellectuals, the "dark" masses by and large share the xenophobic anti-liberal, and antisemitic prejudices of the party of resistance in the *apparat*. Their lot is still hard enough to stimulate a strong need for some group close at hand on whom they could vent their frustrations. Thus numerous strata of the population continue today to respond to antisemitic hints from on high, and hence also at times, as in the case of the sectarians, to harass members of the Jewish population in numerous little ways in the contacts of everyday life.

This, of course, is not to suggest that the situation of Soviet Jews now is the same as that which existed in the times of more or less open persecution during the last years of Stalin; on the contrary, the relative liberalization of Soviet society under Khrushchev has profited the Jews along with the rest of the population, though, to be sure, at a slower pace and to a lesser degree than other groups. Nor is the foregoing intended to imply that anti-Judaism is no more than a permutation of "anti-cosmopolitanism." Much of the anti-Judaic literature *is* an authentic part of a generalized anti-religious campaign, since the "struggle against superstition" is taken seriously by the rather unsophisticated Soviet authorities. Similarly, we should not consider that anti-Judaism is the sole, or even principal, vehicle for the official propagation of antisemitic sentiments in the Soviet Union: the *apparat* conveys it as much in *sub rosa* fashion (private conversation, comments on the "odd" sound of citizen X's name, etc.) as by more direct discriminatory practices and by the emphasis on Jews in the campaign against economic crimes.[1]

Nevertheless, after all these qualifications have been made, the fact remains that in the heated political atmosphere that surrounds the issue of antisemitism in the Soviet Union today, a government-sponsored campaign against Judaism as a religion inevitably has different and more far-reaching implications than do very similar campaigns against religious groups which are not caught in the crossfire between neo-Stalinists and anti-Stalinists. Likewise, in view of the tendency of a bullied people to vent their discontent on others even more wretched, an attack on a religious group that is not recognized by the rest of the population as being "of the people" is more insidious than are campaigns against, say, the Orthodox Church and even the despised sects, which are at least rooted in the "native masses." The official attitude in this respect comes perilously close to an encouragement of antisemitic prejudices pure and simple.

[1] See Harry Willetts, "The Wages of Economic Sin," *Problems of Communism*, No. 5 (September-October), 1962.

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BOOKS

The Comintern in Retrospect

JAMES W. HULSE: *The Forming of the Communist International.* Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1964.
WERNER T. ANGRESS: *Stillborn Revolution: The Communist Bid for Power in Germany, 1921-1923.* Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1963.
KERMIT E. MCKENZIE: *Comintern and World Revolution, 1928-1943: The Shaping of Doctrine.* London and New York, Columbia University Press, 1964.

Reviewed by F. L. Carsten

MORE THAN twenty-five years ago, Franz Borkenau wrote:

The one correct approach to an understanding of the Comintern seems to me to be an historical account of it. . . . And a history of the Communist International is the more necessary because the Communists themselves, owing to the rapid and violent changes of their policies, do not like to recall, during the one phase, what they have done in earlier phases. Yet only the whole of their history can give a correct idea of what they are.[1]

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Borkenau, who was an ex-functionary of the Comintern, himself wrote a number of important books on this topic, published partly before and partly after the Second World War.[2] They were all written extremely rapidly, drawing on the author's vast experience and prodigious memory, and they made only limited use of the large amount of sources available. They give a vivid but rather impressionistic picture of the Communist International at work, of the activities of its principal member parties, of the twists and turns of the party line at important points of history, of failure and defeat in one country after the other. But they are not scholarly histories: Borkenau's methods of work and his strong personal bias and involvement prevented him from writing an impartial study, although he himself was convinced that he could achieve this aim.[3]

Yet, more than twenty years after the demise of the Comintern, we still do not possess any better history. It seems as if the historians have been daunted by the size of the task, by the mass of available documents, periodicals and pamphlets, and by the complexity of the problems in-

[1] F. Borkenau, *The Communist International*, London, Faber and Faber, 1938, p. 7.

[2] *The Communist International* (see note 1); *Der europäische Kommunismus: seine Geschichte von 1917 bis zur Gegenwart*, Bern, Francke Verlag, 1952; *European Communism*, New York, Harper, 1953.

[3] The author of this review vividly remembers the prodigious speed of Borkenau's writing and his impatience when his attention was drawn to sources he had not used.

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volved. Indeed, one might reach the conclusion that it would require a mastermind to write a full account of the Comintern—a mind possessing a thorough knowledge not only of the recent history of Russia and the international working-class movement, but also of all the countries in which the Comintern and its national sections were active. It is true that Jane Degras, while not attempting a complete history, is publishing selected documents of the Comintern with careful introductions and notes [4]—a work indispensable for anyone interested in the subject. It is also true that a German writer, Günther Nollau, has written a new history of international communism and its tactics,[5] but this work is so unsatisfactory and inaccurate that Borkenau's books remain by far the best available introduction to the subject.

In the absence of a comprehensive history of the Comintern from 1919 to 1943, our knowledge has nevertheless been considerably enriched by the publication of many monographs dealing with specific periods and aspects of its history, or with its activities in individual countries. This also applies to two of the books reviewed here, which not only add to our knowledge but open up new paths towards an understanding of this complex phenomenon.

PROFESSOR HULSE emphasizes the important changes which occurred within the Comintern in the short span between the First and Second World Congresses, that is, between the spring of 1919 and the summer of 1920. "In spring 1919, the hope and expectation of an immediate revolution inspired the work of the Bolsheviks. The leaders of the First Congress believed that the triumph of communism was so near in Europe that nothing could prevent it, and that their mission was to prepare the workers for their historically inevitable role." (p. vi) In the words of Zinoviev, then chairman of its Executive Committee, the Comintern was at first merely "an organ of propaganda and agitation," but it must become a "fighting organization that will have to give direct guidance to the movement in the various countries." In dealing with the "ultra-left deviation," the Bolsheviks for the first time imposed "their ideological and organizational policy on foreign parties in a specific matter" (pp. 160-61), and the Comintern already "was becoming a rigid, disciplinarian institution, led by a few Russians" (p. 222).

While not disputing this general trend of development, which was to continue at an accelerated pace after 1920, it is also necessary to point out that Russian control of the Comintern was pronounced from its very foundation and that revolutionary expectations were still running high in 1920. Already at the founding congress, the Bolsheviks controlled nearly a third of the votes: out of a total of 53, five went to the Russian Communist Party, three to the Ukrainian Communist Party, one each to the Communist Party of the German Colonists in Russia, the group of Russian eastern nationalities, the Armenian Communist Party, the Communist Party of Lithuania and White Russia, and the Latvian and Estonian Communist Parties, while the three votes of the Polish party were in the hands of Unshlikht, a Bolshevik who later became a high Cheka official and deputy people's commissar for war.[6] Moreover, the central bureau of the new International had three Russians—Lenin, Trotsky and Zinoviev—among its five members, and Zinoviev became chairman of the Executive Committee, the famous ECCI.

Thus, Bolshevik control was firmly established from the outset, quite apart from the unique prestige which the victorious Bolsheviks enjoyed among their comrades from other countries. At the Second World Congress no less than 65 out of the total 167 votes were allotted to the Russian Communist Party, with another 14 distributed among the Georgian, Armenian, Latvian, Lithuanian and White Russian, and Azerbaijanian Communist parties—a total of 79.[7] That at least one foreign member of the International found this situation embarrassing is indicated by the curious fact that the official report of the Austrian Communist Party on the Second World Congress allowed the Russian Communist Party only 10 votes—equalling the allotments of the American, British, French, German and Italian parties—and altogether omitted mention of the votes allocated to the parties of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Latvia.[8]

THE MOST important of the books under review is the work of Professor Angress. It not

[4] *The Communist International, 1919-1943, Documents*, Vols I and II, London, New York, and Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1956-60. A third volume is in preparation.

[5] Günther Nollau, *International Communism and World Revolution: History and Methods*, New York, Frederick A. Praeger, 1961. *Cf.* this author's review in *The Slavic Review*, September 1962, pp. 559-60.

[6] *Der I. Kongress der Kommunistischen Internationale: Protokoll der Verhandlungen in Moskau vom 2. bis zum 19. März 1919*, Hamburg, Carl Hoym Nachf., 1921, pp. 4-5.

[7] *Der zweite Kongress der Kommunist. Internationale: Protokoll der Verhandlungen vom 19. Juli in Petrograd und vom 23. Juli bis 7. August 1920 in Moskau*, Hamburg, Carl Hoym Nachf., 1921, pp. 780-88.

[8] *Der zweite Kongress der Kommunistischen Internationale* (document published by the Austrian Communist Party) Vienna, Verlag der Arbeiter-Buchhandlung, 1920, p. 199.

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only is a history of the German Communist Party (KPD) from its beginnings during the First World War up to the second (and last) abortive attempt at revolution in Germany at the end of 1923; it also successfully disentangles the complicated relationship between the leaders of the KPD and the Comintern. While the KPD in 1919 was probably the most independent party to join the Comintern—indeed, its delegate to the First Congress had precise instructions *not* to join—the author convincingly shows that the disastrous failure of the party's "March Action" of 1921, in which the KPD leaders tried to "create" a revolutionary situation in Germany, and the consequent negotiations at the Third World Congress, led to the imposition of Russian control. The KPD, says Professor Angress, "unwittingly surrendered to Moscow a large share of its former independence which it was never to regain" and instead fell subject to "Leninist centralization and discipline. . . . The position of the Comintern had been immeasurably strengthened." (pp. 193-96). It was precisely this "Bolshevization" which rendered the KPD—as it later did other Communist parties—incapable of becoming a genuine revolutionary party and of winning the adherence of the German workers, for its interests were thenceforth subordinated to those of Moscow. It should be noted here that another historian, Richard Lowenthal, has reached similar conclusions independently of Dr. Angress and before him.[9]

Equally interesting, and of quite general importance, are the author's conclusions about the "united front" policy which, in one form or the other, became the stock-in-trade of every Communist Party. "But the party could not afford to, and never did, conduct this policy in good faith. To have done so would have meant a compromise with revolutionary principles. Thus the united front policy was turned into a policy of attrition, designed to undermine . . . the rival working-class organizations which the Communists professed to want to convert to their side." (p. 376) It was in reality a policy of "alternately wooing and insulting other labor organizations" and was therefore doomed to remain sterile.

While Professor Angress is extremely knowledgeable and interesting on the affairs of the KPD, there are occasional lapses when he writes about the Comintern leaders. For instance, it is somewhat startling to be told that Lenin's lifelong associate, Zinoviev, "jumped on the Bolshevik bandwagon in 1917 only at the last minute" (p. 51). Again, the information supplied on p. 336 about German-Russian military relations is misleading. It is very doubtful whether, as the author asserts, "the KPD would have found the idea of a Russo-German military alliance tempting," for such an alliance would have severely cramped its revolutionary propaganda, and the later leaks of a secret military understanding proved most embarassing to the KPD. Nor can it be maintained that German "military circles" considered such an alliance "premature and dangerous": on the contrary, in 1922 General von Seeckt, then commander of the Reichswehr, was pressing for such an alliance, and the first treaty between the two armies was signed on July 29, 1922. In contrast with Dr. Angress' statement, Karl Radek conducted the secret negotiations with the Reichswehr and twice visited Berlin for that purpose, in January-February and again in December 1922.[10] Yet these are minor blemishes in a book which seems likely to remain for long not only a standard history of the KPD during its most important years, but also a case history of the failure of Communist revolution and Comintern policy.

AS MUCH cannot be said for the third volume under review. In contrast with the other two authors, Professor McKenzie does not deal with concrete historical events, or with the activities of the Comintern in one or several countries, but rather with its ideology, "the shaping of doctrine." For this purpose he analyzes in great detail the program of the Comintern adopted at the Sixth World Congress in 1928 and the proceedings of the Sixth and Seventh World Congresses, but he makes no attempt to sketch the application of these doctrines and theories in different countries, not even by way of example. He also draws his material entirely from the publications of the Comintern itself: there is no evidence that he has used the periodicals, pamphlets or papers published by the principal Communist parties. Nor are we given any information about the Comintern's leaders, its *apparat,* and its propaganda efforts, at a time when it exercised strong influence in many countries. The book thus becomes largely a semantic exercise in Communist jargon. It does not tell anything new to those who are already familiar with the subject, nor is it likely to enlighten those who are not.

The book also provides evidence of the danger of overspe-

[9] *Cf.* Lowenthal's chapter, "The Bolshevisation of the Spartacus League," in *International Communism,* edited by David Footman, London, Chatto & Windus, 1960, pp. 23-71. See also this writer's review in *Problems of Communism,* No. 4 (July-August) 1961, p. 55.

[10] For details, see F. L. Carsten, "The Reichswehr and the Red Army, 1920-1933," *Survey* (London), No. 44/45, 1962, pp. 119-20.

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cialization. While the author is well-informed about the post-1928 period which is the subject of his volume, he shows surprising ignorance about the preceding years. He is wrong, for example, in asserting that "the German 'left radicals' were the followers of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht" (p. 21): the "left radicals" or "Bremen left" were in fact further to the left than the Spartacists and had close connections with Karl Radek and the Bolsheviks.[11] Equally misleading is it to say: "The popular front government was a most daring and novel concept. . . . The concept permitted the entry of Communists into governments, under certain conditions, *before* the Communist seizure of power." (pp. 154-55) That is exactly what the KPD had practiced as early as 1923 when its leaders entered the governments of Saxony and Thuringia. And surely, when quoting a 1936 Communist statement that "the assertion that the Soviet Union with its Red Army is setting itself the task of carrying the revolution into Europe belongs to the foulest propagandistic inventions of German fascism" (p. 150), Professor McKenzie should have pointed out that this is precisely what had been attempted during the Russo-Polish war of 1920. Similarly, the author's statement in his conclusions that "the generalization of Soviet Russian experience became a common practice" (p. 295) is already true of the period before 1928. In sum, it seems a pity to waste so much energy to produce results which are so obvious, even to the uninitiated.

In the past the Comintern aroused great passions and evoked heated controversies, not least within its own ranks. Today it attracts the attention of many younger historians. Perhaps it is not too much to hope that one day a satisfactory account of its entire history will be forthcoming.

[11] This is stated quite correctly in the book to which Dr. McKenzie himself refers in the footnote to the above sentence: Paul Frölich, *Rosa Luxemburg*, London, Gollancz, 1940, p. 311.

A Look at the Russians

HARVEY J. PITCHER: *Understanding the Russians*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1964.

Reviewed by Ronald Hingley

ANYONE flipping over the pages of this book will notice frequent references to various "Kolias," "Mashas," and the like—and thus might receive a mistaken impression. For this is not still another of those cozy little chats about Russia which tend to begin: "Galia looked up quizzically. 'But you see,' she said, 'Soviet youth. . . .'" If Mr. Pitcher refers to his Russian *dramatis personae* by the intimate form of their Christian names, it is a right he has earned the hard way, and not an attempt to create a spurious "human interest."

Nor is this book the product of a casual ten days spent in the custodianship of Intourist. It is the work of someone seriously interested in Russia, who has spent an academic year in Leningrad as an exchange student. That is the best method so far devised for a foreigner to plunge himself into the Soviet Russian atmosphere—and Mr. Pitcher seems to have gone in at the deep end. Some of his readers, had they found themselves sharing a

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room with his Kolia (a young party member and activist student of Mr. Pitcher's own age), would no doubt have devoted their entire efforts to finding different quarters. Instead of this, Pitcher more sensibly settled down to study his roommate, and he has pinned that young activist down on paper with deadly clinical detachment.

THERE IS considerable literary skill in this full-length portrait of a party lieutenant who distinguishes himself from ordinary people and assumes without question that in life you either tell others what to do or are told what to do yourself. The clash between British and Soviet attitudes is well brought out, too—as, for instance, where Pitcher tells Kolia on one occasion that he intends to take a country walk near Leningrad. This is an idea which the average Soviet mind is ill-conditioned to receive. (A walk, yes. But you must have some justification, if only picking mushrooms. And besides, who is to accompany you?) Kolia's reaction took Pitcher completely by surprise. " 'I suppose you want to see how people live in the villages,' he said accusingly, and was not all convinced when I said that I had not even given this a thought." Kolia, it seems, identified Pitcher as a bourgeois activist—his own opposite number, as it were—and therefore assumed him to be as incapable as himself of wanting to go for a walk in the country for the pure pleasure of it.

Similarly, as Mr. Pitcher points out later, "it is almost impossible for a convinced Communist to admit to his conscious mind the thought that an English right-wing newspaper, for instance, might publish an article by a left-wing politician. He will simply not believe you; the thought of a situation in which the our-side/their-side distinction is being deliberately flouted is too disturbing to contemplate." This combative approach is also found in the passage where Kolia "measures up" Khrushchev and Eisenhower. "It was difficult," observes Pitcher, "not to conclude that he was talking about a couple of prizefighters rather than two heads of state."

KOLIA'S is the fullest of a number of sketches which the author draws of Soviet citizens and situations. But Kolia was worth treating at length, for though ordinary Soviet citizens have been well described before, to catch the spirit of an activist in this way is a rarer achievement. Pitcher's book is in any case something more than a series of sketches: it is, as the title implies, an investigation into the Russian character as a whole. Kolia and his contemporaries represent the field work and are laid out for inspection at the beginning of the book. Later comes the theoretical section in which an explanation of their behavior patterns is attempted.

One clue to the Russian character is detected in the contrast between a person's ideal personality and his workaday self. Mr. Pitcher links this with the "apparent Russian inability to distinguish between intention and action." Once again it is Kolia who provides the best illustration. "Whenever a stranger came into the room—whether a Russian or a Westerner—Kolia's 'liveliness index' would immediately shoot up several points. He became instantly more animated, his conversation more fluent, his grin wider than ever. 'You'll be able to go back to England and tell them how jolly Soviet students are,' he would comment after this sort of performance."

As this passage perhaps shows, one is not always sure to what extent irony is present in Mr. Pitcher's description of the Soviet milieu. Nor is one sure about the author's personal attitude toward such figures as Kolia. The latter comes over in these pages as a sort of jolly monster, but whether Pitcher liked him, detested him, or was indifferent to him is not at all clear. This reserve gives the book a piquant flavor.

Most of the text is devoted to posing the problem of Soviet Russian behavior, and this is done most adroitly. But what about the author's attempts to supply an answer? If these have not succeeded, it is not for want of trying. A rapid but workmanlike survey of Russian history, with particular stress on the Mongol overlordship, is combined with an analysis of Russian institutions, placing special emphasis on the *mir* or rural commune, in an attempt to find the solution.

THIS SECTION of the book is also well written and argued, and whatever anyone may think of the conclusions, Mr. Pitcher has established himself among the more literate of the many writers on the Soviet Union, both in his command of his own language and in his solid knowledge of the background. But some readers may find him a little implausible, although it is hard to disagree with the individual stages in his skilfully deployed theses.

Has Russian society always been (and is it still very nearly) predominantly peasant? Yes. Was the prerevolutionary village commune an important and specifically Russian institution, and does its insistence on unanimous decisions represent a striking parallel with certain Soviet practices? Yes. One can take all this—in fact, one seems to remember taking a lot of it several times before. But there is something a little too pat about the swinging generalization with which the author finds Russian "dual-

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ism" to be the key to the whole mystery.

This dualism takes the form of a tension between self-assertion and submission—or, to put it differently, between the demands of self and of society. But what is so specially Russian about that? It is part of the experience of every individual (mental defectives aside) in every society, primitive or civilized. Are Russians really so different from others? And are they indeed such an enigma as we sometimes pretend? For example, Kolia's type is to be found all over the place. The main difference is that in free societies the Kolias can be told to go jump in the lake. It is only in a totalitarian community—be it Hitlerite, Stalinist or Khrushchevite—that these toads can crawl out from under their stones and exude their nasty little poisons at will.

Rather than these disquisitions on dualism, it might have been more interesting to find guidance as to why certain societies in recent times, notably the German and Russian, have tolerated totalitarian governments despite the fact that the individual citizens of neither nation seem endowed with any special taint of political original sin. Have they just been unlucky?

ONE INCIDENT recounted in Mr. Pitcher's book impresses one with the need to tread warily in making generalizations about national character. Pitcher describes how, on one occasion when he attended a Leningrad cinema, the sound-track failed, whereupon the audience reacted uproariously—whistling, stamping, clapping, and yelling "Sound!" He contrasts this with the restraint of his fellow countrymen. An English audience, he says, would have been content "with a few derisive whistles and the silent turning of heads towards the projection room."

Now, as it happens, I was in the Soviet Union at about the same time as Mr. Pitcher and attended a cinema performance in Moscow which was made glorious by a more spectacular technical hitch. The film stopped bang in the middle of the portrayal of a rocket launching, which had been preceded by lots of bombast about Soviet technical progress. The unfortunate rocket was left suspended in the middle of the screen for several minutes. Now this would have had any English audience rolling in the aisles, but not the phlegmatic Muscovite, who sat there in dead silence. Of course, the members of a Moscow audience might be more cowed than the uninhibited Leningraders, but the contrast between the two incidents is a warning against building deductions on isolated incidents.

With a few such reservations, this is a book to be welcomed. It is not one of those odious works which insult the Russians by seeking to prove elaborately that they are "people." It is more of a clinical study, and one that attains an unusual level of literary excellence. As an attempt to explain the Russian character, it is perhaps no more convincing than theories based on the swaddling of Russian babies or the supposed Rusian desire to reenter the womb. But does that really matter so very much? To travel hopefully is said to be better than to arrive, and it is on a stimulating journey that Mr. Pitcher conducts his reader.

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NOTES & VIEWS

Provincial Towns in Russia: Notes from a Journey

By Anthony Sylvester

"You won't find any white bread once you are out of Moscow," a Russian friend of mine remarked as I took leave of him at the Vnukovo airport before boarding a plane for the south of Russia. His warning was not particularly disturbing to me, but I could readily understand the thought that prompted my friend to utter it. To him bread was still the staple diet, something it has long since ceased to be for most people in western Europe, and in Russia white bread is preferred to brown.

There was indeed no white bread in the places I visited after Moscow, with the exception of Leningrad and Kiev, which both have almost the stature of capital cities. Both are showplaces in their own right and attract considerable numbers of foreign visitors. There as well as in Moscow, food supplies seemed adequate, although the prices of many items were higher than at the time of my last visit three years before and the quality was generally inferior to that found almost anywhere else in Europe. But in the provincial towns appalling shortages of food were in evidence.

I reflected on the significance of air transport for the USSR as the silvery Tupolev jet bore me, comfortably and at high speed, towards a distant southern city. The passengers aboard the plane looked as if they might have been travelling on a bus in an English industrial area. Large women with babies on their laps were wiping sweat from their brows. Men in shirt sleeves and wearing soft caps or hideous straw hats gave the appearance of having just clocked out of their factory.

In Moscow I had seen posters advertising flights to Vladivostok, at the eastern extremity of the Soviet Union, in a flying time of just four and a half hours. From Moscow to Rostov-on-Don, it takes only two hours by air, compared to 19 by train, and costs less. For the round trip between Kiev and Simferopol (Crimea), I paid 36 rubles—about the cost of an average pair of men's shoes in the USSR. The fare from Leningrad to Sochi, on the Black Sea, was the same.

Evidently air travel is the answer to the problem posed by the vast distances of the USSR. As time goes on and modern air transport is further developed, these distances will become less significant, and differences between the main cities and the provincial towns will shrink. But at present they still provide some of the bewildering contrasts in which the Russian scene so lavishly abounds.

Before my previous trip to the Soviet Union in 1961 as an individual tourist, I had applied for permission to visit a number of provincial towns in the Ukraine. Permission was refused in most cases, on the ground that

Well known as a writer on Soviet and East European affairs, Mr. Sylvester travelled extensively in the USSR last summer. He last appeared in this journal with "Workers' Councils: Guideposts for the Future?" (January-February 1964).

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no facilities for accomodating foreign tourists were available in the places concerned. Yet, while I was in Kiev, I simply took a country bus and traveled to Bielaia Tserkov, some 70 miles away. Nobody asked me any questions when I arrived there and went walking about the town. What I saw reminded me sharply of wartime German propaganda pictures of Russia. Thick clouds of dust enveloped the roads, which were pitted in places with holes a foot deep and more. Barefooted girls were carrying buckets of water. In a stagnant pool some middle-aged women were splashing about in the summer heat, naked save for their black cotton pants. A man who sat down next to me for a sunbath told me that he had not been paid any wages for the past two months. "This happens quite frequently," he added. "The trouble is, out here we are far away from the main office of our enterprise." He was a construction worker, he said, and had a sick wife and two children to support.

In Odessa, I happened to strike up a conversation with a girl student in the main city park. I told her that I had just visited a model "palace of culture" outside the town, where kolkhoz farmers and their families could watch dramatic and other performances in a large hall with 800 upholstered seats and golden chandeliers adorning the ceiling. Trumpets, violins, and other instruments, including an unusually large number of pianos, were available for those who desired to learn music. "We have nothing like that," the girl remarked. "In my town [nearly 200 miles to the east] we have barely one cinema performance a week, and there is no other entertainment whatsoever."

"I shall do everything I can to move to Moscow," an acquaintance I met in Rostov-on-Don told me. "I don't wish my children to grow up here." In the capital, he explained, his children would get a better education and their chances of making a good career would be much greater. Despite his remark, there seemed to be no shortage of educational institutions in Rostov-on-Don —or, for that matter, in any of the other provincial towns I visited. Our Intourist guide informed us that there were 100 secondary schools, 42 colleges and institutes, one university, 22 research institutes, 122 medical establishments, 4 stage theaters and 42 cinema houses. (The city now has a population of about 700,000.) The fact is, however, that the quality of teaching is far superior in Moscow, and a degree from Moscow University carries unsurpassed prestige in the USSR.

But the problem faced by people like my friend in Rostov is how to obtain permission to resettle in Moscow. This depends not only on the work one does but also on whether one can find living accommodations in the capital. Actually, permission to move to Moscow is given only in exceptional cases. Still, ways are sometimes found. For example, I was told, single persons contract temporary marriages with partners already residing in Moscow; then, once the spouse is safely established there, the couple obtains a pre-agreed divorce.

Although drab by West European standards, life in Moscow or Leningrad appears gay and attractive to the inhabitants of Soviet provincial towns. The best theaters and artists are there. In the sphere of culture, these two leading cities of the Soviet Union provide a kind of window to the outside world, and it is there, too, that the old Russian heritage—whatever is left of it—mainly survives. But what the residents of the provincial towns envy most of all is the fact that their countrymen in the main cities are far better provided with the necessities of life.

In Volgograd (the former Stalingrad), for instance, although potatoes were on sale in the large and modern enclosed market on the day I visited it, I was told that none had been available for some time. And even now that they could be had, at 35 kopeks (about 35 US cents) per kilogram they were much too expensive for such persons as old-age pensioners, who must live on a monthly income of 30-40 rubles, to afford. Other vegetables, too, were scarce, and hardly any fruit at all was available, with the exception of some small, rather inferior oranges selling at 40 kopeks each! Eggs could be bought for 12 kopeks apiece, and women dressed in spotlessly clean white overalls were selling milk at 40 kopeks per liter, and butter at 3.60 rubles per kilogram. But the only meat available was some very inferior pork, at 1.80 rubles per kilogram. "This meat comes from animals that had to be slaughtered because there was nothing to feed them," remarked a member of the crowd pressing against the meat counter. Elsewhere in the town that same day, I observed long queues of housewives waiting to buy sugar. In one queue I counted nearly 200 persons. The sugar was being sold at 1.2 rubles per kilogram,[1] and only one kilogram could be bought at a time.

The food situation was more or less similar in other provincial towns I visited, but I gathered from talking to people that shortages had been much more severe in some localities than in others. I was told, for instance, that certain towns such as Tula—which, incidentally, were closed to foreign visitors—have experienced conditions of near-starvation this year, with the children suffering particularly from lack of milk. Sometimes also, failures of the distribution system cause local shortages of food items not generally in short supply. Thus, although there was no general shortage of fish, in Rostov-on-Don I noticed a large number of housewives waiting outside a fishmonger's shop at seven in the morning.

[1] This compared with a price of 0.90 rubles per kilogram at the time of my 1961 visit. The prices of butter and milk were also higher, butter selling at 3.60 rubles per kilogram as against 2.9 rubles in 1961, and milk at 0.40 rubles per liter as against 0.18.

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One thing that particularly surprised me was to find that no fruit, not even oranges, were to be had in Sochi despite the fact that the adjacent area of Georgia is famous for its orchards. Last winter apparently had been the harshest in fifty years and had played havoc with the crops. Generally unfavorable weather conditions in many parts of the Soviet Union are known to have been a factor in causing the recent shortages of food, but there was also gross maladministration of agriculture, as the Soviet leaders themselves have admitted.

"We live even worse now than under Stalin," a man in Rostov-on-Don complained to me. "This year is worse than last," he added, "and 1963 was worse than 1962." Surprising as his statements seemed, they were echoed by several other persons I encountered during my visit.

Food shortages have occasionally caused serious unrest. People with whom I talked corroborated the fact that Novocherkassk, the capital of the Don Cossacks and an unusually pleasant town situated in green, undulating country, had been the scene of large-scale demonstrations and riots in the summer of 1962.[2] Police and army troops had to use force to contain the angry mobs of demonstrators, and the entire town was closed to outside visitors. I was also told that similar demonstrations had taken place more recently in Krasnodar, and that widespread panic had occurred in the autumn of 1963 because of fears of an acute shortage of food. People had rushed to buy whatever provisions they could lay their hands on in order to hoard them for an emergency.

Still, the continuing shortages of some of the most basic food items struck me as something of a mystery in the light of what I saw of the countryside during my recent visit. While driving, for instance, from Rostov-on-Don to the coal-mining area in the Don Basin, a distance of some 70 miles, I passed by well-cultivated fields of prodigiously fertile land and model orchards stretching far into the distance. Modern farming machinery, I noticed, was extensively used.

"Even when harvests are not so good, we ought to have enough to eat here," a man in Rostov remarked to me. And when I asked him where the food went, he replied bitterly, "The government sends it to Egypt and Algeria and other countries in Africa and Asia." His explanation, I thought, was noteworthy less for its accuracy than for the indication it gave of the feelings of the population, or at any rate of some people in the USSR. Quite a few others gave me the same answer. Very common, too, was the explanation that food was short because the farmers refused to work. "They won't work for nothing," I was told by an angry housewife standing in one of the ubiquitous queues.

It is obvious, however, that a great deal of the food produced in the Soviet Union never reaches state distribution channels nor even the officially tolerated free markets of the kolkhozniks. It is often sold to friends or exchanged for other goods. In Georgia, I was told, many local people travel long distances in order to dispose privately of oranges, lemons and other produce grown in their own gardens. Indeed, in almost any Soviet railway or bus station, one is sure to see large numbers of countryfolk carrying bulging sacks. "They seem to live here as we lived during the war," remarked a member of a Czechoslovak delegation staying at my hotel in Volgograd.

With respect to consumer goods other than food, the situation appeared somewhat better than at the time of my 1961 visit. More goods of better quality seemed to be available at least in the major cities, although there was clearly less improvement noticeable in the provincial towns. The people one sees on the streets are still probably drabber in appearance than anywhere else in Europe, but they are nevertheless better and more adequately—if not elegantly—dressed than before, particularly in Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev. The design of men's and women's clothing is improving and becoming more contemporary. The large new "Moskva" department store in the capital is a far cry from the proverbial and ugly GUM: it is modern and spacious, with large display windows arranged with taste and imagination, and offers a much greater variety of goods, including some fairly attractive items of clothing imported from Czechoslovakia and East Germany. Prices, however, remain atrociously high for even the simplest garments—a woman's rayon slip, for example, costs 14 rubles, or about $15.

The relative abundance of consumer goods in Moscow contrasts sharply with the serious shortages that continue to exist in the provincial towns. "I can't buy electric wire or bulbs here now," a friend in Rostov told me. "If I wish to obtain these things—and I could give you many more examples—I must either travel myself to Kiev or Moscow or ask someone else to do it for me." Extensive black-market operations are carried on to satisfy the demand for goods in short supply.

Individual commodities also are often more expensive in the provincial towns than they are in the main cities. During my visit to Bielaia Tserkov in 1961, I saw men's jackets and women's coats on sale in the only state shop in town at prices that were some 20-30 percent higher than in Kiev. When I asked the reason, I was told that in the big urban centers, where consumers were more sophisticated, the department stores frequently found it hard to sell shoddy merchandise and were obliged to reduce prices in order to dispose of their stocks.

[2] On the Novocherkassk riots, see Albert Boiter, "When the Kettle Boils Over . . .," *Problems of Communism*, No. 1 (January-February) 1964, pp. 36-7.

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In Volgograd, a Russian friend of mine asked me to sell him a pair of my nylon socks, for which he offered me 3 rubles, or about 3 US dollars at the official exchange rate. I thought he wanted them because synthetic textiles are as yet exceedingly rare in the Soviet Union. "No," he said, "I simply cannot get a pair of socks in town, not even cotton or woollen ones."

My friend, a teacher, occasionally travels to Leningrad, where he has relatives, to buy things that he cannot obtain locally—for example, spare parts for motor cars. He sometimes resells some of these purchases to his friends at a small profit, thus supplementing his salary of just under 90 rubles a month.

My friend was living with his wife and two children in a house of his own, situated in a private housing development in the Volgograd suburbs. "I would much prefer to live in a government flat," he told me, but after waiting for one from just after the war without success, he had finally given up. "Had I been a party member," he said, "I would have had no difficulty in getting a flat."

His house was a small, one-story structure, with three rooms and a kitchen. There was electricity, and the family had radio and television sets. The development contained some 300 houses of similar construction, many of them with television antennas protruding from the rooftops. "None has an inside toilet," my friend told me. Each house merely had a primitive lavatory standing in the backyard. Water had to be fetched from a pump up the road, which served some hundred houses. My friend had paid 4,000 rubles for the house. Since then, however, the government has banned any further building by private owners.

When I went out to my friend's home, I took a taxi. The driver stopped the car about half a mile from the development and let me out, explaining that he could go no farther because the road was too bad. It was indeed. As I walked on in the direction he pointed out to me, I sank deep in the mud every now and then. "Few can even go to work when there is heavy rain or snow," my friend told me. "The roads out here become practically impassable." Later when I stepped out of my friend's house in the darkness to go back to my hotel, I fell into a ditch, sinking knee-deep in mud. It apparently was not an unusual mishap.

From the house we walked about half a mile to the nearest bus stop, and there we had to wait for at least half an hour before the bus came. It was a twenty-minute ride back to the center of Volgograd, but the fare was only five kopeks.

Living in a provincial town like Volgograd, and more particularly in a suburban area such as the one where my friend has his home, is not without its advantages. "Out here," he told me, "we need have no fear of party snoopers. You or your friends can always come to my house. All my neighbors are non-Communists." He and his family, it appeared, experienced relatively little political pressure or chicanery, in sharp contrast to the descriptions given me by other Russian friends who live in large apartment blocks in the main cities. "In the last three years," my friend said, "we were called only twice to attend political gatherings." In Moscow, by contrast, meetings of the inhabitants of an apartment block or a street are far more frequent—a situation which has been the subject of considerable complaint.

There is other evidence that political and other supervision by state and party authorities is less stringent in the provincial towns than in the capital. For instance, I was often shadowed very closely in Moscow and Leningrad, but hardly at all in Volgograd, Rostov, Sochi and other places.

Volgograd now has 680,000 inhabitants as compared to just over 445,000 in 1939, and the pressure caused by the influx of people leaving the land in the surrounding area is as great as ever, creating difficult housing problems. The city has now been almost completely rebuilt from its wartime ruins, in a style that is largely dull and forbidding save for the straight, wide avenues lined with trees. As a reminder of the ravages of war, one solitary bombed-out building has been left standing and is now the object of much photographing by foreign visitors, mainly delegations from other Communist countries which arrive in the city almost daily. An enormous war monument is being hewn out of rock on the spot where the fiercest fighting took place in the heroic defense of the city against the Germans.

The visitor to Volgograd finds that all mention of Stalin, or of the city's former name of Stalingrad, is studiously avoided. For instance, a film that was shown to a select audience of foreign tourists in Volgograd's planetarium contrived to describe the events of the war without so much as making a single reference to the man who once was credited with a leading part in the Stalingrad victory.

Almost everywhere in the Soviet Union one sees evidence that the housing problem, which was virtually ignored for decades, is now being energetically tackled, with the construction of new housing proceeding at a very fast pace. Large blocks of flats, some of them approaching contemporary style, with balconies painted in vivid red or blue or orange, are mushrooming up on the outskirts of Soviet cities and towns. "We build more housing per year than any other country," boasted our guide in one of the places I visited.

In Kiev I talked with an architect on the construction site of a vast new complex of apartment buildings which, upon completion, would house a claimed 300,000 people. "We would build even faster," he told me, "if we weren't faced with bottlenecks in the supply of lumber and metal materials." I asked him how large a waiting list there was for

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Vignette of a Provincial Town

Lida is in many ways a pleasant little town. It is tidy and has plenty of greenery. Once there were only one-story houses in the town, but today its old quarters are surrounded by tall apartment houses and industrial structures. . . . The Lideika River has been dammed and an artificial lake created where one can now boat, swim or fish.

A comrade from this locality invited me to come to the lake. . . . Anticipating the pleasure of a swim, I went to the department store to buy a towel. The salesgirl gave me a look that expressed a mixture of surprise and irony. "You're from out of town, I suppose? Well, well."

I was ready to interpret her reply in any sense whatever except that my demand could not be fulfilled. But alas, that was exactly what she meant. . . . Nevertheless, we went swimming in the lake. After drying myself with a handkerchief, I politely expressed my bewilderment at this strange shortage.

"Let's discuss the question with our trade officials," my companion suggested. And that's what we did. The conversation took place in the office of the deputy director of the city trade trust. . . . Here is what I found out . . . at the improvised conference.

The Ministry of Trade, citing a towel shortage on a republic-wide scale, mercilessly cuts the orders of the Lida Trade Trust. This simple product has to be procured from outside Belorussia. Expeditions are fitted out and sent to Lithuania and Latvia. After they arrive, the merchants from Lida first exchange greetings, chat about this and that, and then get down to business. But they do not say a word about the subject that interests them most, in order not to drive up the price inadvertently. They start from the other end:

"Won't you let us have some knitted goods?"

"What!" The hosts throw up their hands. "We have more than enough customers for knitted goods."

"But, all the same?"

"We'll give you some, but on one condition—take along some goods that are not in demand. Towels, say."

"What are we going to do with those we have already?" the guests mourn hypocritically. But, after some protestation for decency's sake, they finally "capitulate." And they go away with the towels that they need, plus knitted goods that they do not need at all. Both sides are satisfied: the sellers for having unloaded unwanted goods on their visitors, and the buyers for having obtained goods in short supply.

It is somewhat the same with bicycles. They are manufactured in Minsk but are shipped to Lida in wholly insufficient numbers. What can one do? Obviously, go to Kaunas for Minsk bicycles. That's what they do. The trade network over there has accumulated two or three bicycles for each potential rider.

Each time the shrewd trade agents come home with a supply of bicycles or towels procured on the side, they are greeted with flowers and deafening drumbeats that are heard as far as the republic Ministry of Trade. . . .

By now the reader may have gotten the impression that the city I praised so strongly at the beginning is not that attractive after all. . . . But don't lose heart, friends! When you go to Lida, . . . you can take two or three towels along. To make up for it, you don't need to take canvas or rubber boots: the stores and warehouses have a four years' supply of them!

"Have mercy on us!" the trade trust wires the ministry. "But we can't disrupt the plans of the plant that produces these goods," Minsk objects. So the people in Lida have no choice but to look for organizations that will agree to buy the extra canvas and rubber boots from them. So far they have not been able to sell them.

But all hope is not lost. Fortune smiled on them. They had been showered with caramels from the Bobruisk Confectionery Factory. And who do you think bought the Bobruisk caramels from Lida? The Bobruisk District Union of Consumers' Cooperatives! Here is the route of these caramels: Bobruisk to Lida to Bobruisk.

When I was in Lida, the price of one kilogram of fresh cucumbers was one ruble, 40 kopeks. This was in the state trade outlets. At the market it was one ruble. The salesmen in the state booths and stalls invited the public to come in, but they themselves bought vegetables at the market—and fruit, too.

"You should see the contretemps that goes on with apples in autumn," Comrade Krylova, a grocery store director, told me. It turns out that the market beats out the state trade outlets on the apple front as well. . . . Fruit and vegetables shipped to the state stores spoil and are written off as "natural losses.". . .

I repeat: residents of Lida are rightly proud of their city, and in my opinion they don't exaggerate too greatly when they assert that everything here is as good as in Minsk. But if, to all the good things you find here today, a modest supply of towels in the trade network is added and the immodest supply of canvas boots, on the other hand, is reduced to reasonable proportions; if the residents of Lida can buy bicycles in the department store and not have caramels, with which they are surfeited, foisted upon them. . . ; if the market prices of vegetables and fruit drop under the pressure of state trade prices and not the reverse . . . —then, I think, residents of Lida would be able to take still greater pride in their city. Because Lida is even today a pleasant city in many ways.

—From article by S. Rudenko, in Izvestia (Moscow), July 22, 1964.

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the flats under construction. "I can't tell you that," he replied. "All I can say is that it is enormous."

There appeared to be no shortage of unskilled labor for such construction projects, probably because of the large numbers of people moving into the cities from the rural areas and anxious to find any sort of work. However, it is clear that both skilled labor and building materials are much more readily available in the main cities than in the provinces. In the more remote provincial towns, one often sees construction workers using primitive tools, and the workmanship is definitely inferior.

Even in the main cities, the quality of new housing construction still leaves much to be desired in spite of some improvement over the last few years. "We are learning all the time," said the building foreman who showed our group through some newly-completed flats in Kiev. In some of the rooms, however, the paint was already peeling off the walls, and there were other evidences of crude workmanship and poor materials.

In spite of all this new construction, a great many families still live in extremely cramped, inadequate quarters. In Sochi, for instance, a friend invited me to see his tiny one-room flat, where he was living with his wife and three daughters, the eldest already thirteen. The room was small and so crammed with furniture that even a single person would have had difficulty moving about in it. My friend had been an army officer during the last war but now had a minor job as a mechanic in Sochi, his home town. Still, he was earning what appeared to be about the average salary of most people—*i.e.*, approximately 100 rubles a month. He could have afforded to pay more for better living quarters had he been able to obtain them.

Anyone who knew Sochi as it was five years ago would not easily recognize it now. A great number of new buildings have sprung up, including a cinema theater named Sputnik, built in strikingly contemporary architectural style. It would seem that their successes in space travel have given the Russians a new feeling of self-confidence that enables them to accept with good grace architectural and artistic ideas from abroad which they hitherto looked upon as almost immoral. A new housing development has also been built, with large, modern blocks of flats. "It also has its own shopping center," our guide said proudly.

Yet, the new construction is far from adequate to accommodate the influx of more and more people into this burgeoning resort town. The resident population has grown in the last five years from 50,000 to 167,000, while the number of transient vacationers and tourists has been swelling by about 30 percent each year. The total number of transients visiting the area this year is expected to reach approximately one and a half million. Part of this flow consists of deserving workers sent to Sochi by their trade union organizations to enjoy largely expense-free vacations amidst the palatial luxury of the 55 state-run "sanatoriums." But the vast majority are people who go there on their own (in a "wild" way, as the Russians put it), paying exorbitant rates for the privilege of squeezing themselves into the already overcrowded flats of local residents or any other accommodations they can find. At the height of the tourist season, endless queues form in front of the shops and restaurants, and the beaches are so crowded with bathers that one has difficulty finding a place to sit down.

Not only is Sochi already the Soviet Union's most popular seaside vacation resort, but it is rapidly becoming a showplace attracting visitors from other parts of the Soviet bloc. For this reason, it is certainly far from typical of Russian towns its size. Indeed, its unique development suggests that tourism, if it were freed from hampering official regulation and control, not only could become an important industry in many Soviet regions, but also could help some of the provincial towns to emancipate themselves and become more like the leading cities in amenities and sophistication. However, as my travels convinced me, this is far from being the case in the Soviet Union today.

My tour of southern Russia completed, I returned to Moscow and there boarded a plane for the flight back to England. As the big jet aircraft left behind the vast green-and-brown expanse of Russia, I found myself thinking how much less of a mystery the Soviet Union is today than it was some years ago. Now, the foreigner is permitted to see a great deal more of the country and its people than in the past—with some 38 Soviet cities and towns normally open to Western tourists—making it possible to piece together the many baffling contrasts of the Russian scene into a more or less coherent picture. We now know with certainty that the overall picture is far less bright than the Soviet authorities would have us believe, though exactly how much less is still a matter of speculation.

The truth about life in the Soviet Union assumes particular significance at a time when communism is being offered to the teeming millions of Asia, Africa and Latin America as a system whereby they can elevate themselves from poverty. And with more people from these areas now going to the USSR to see for themselves, the truth is becoming harder to gloss. I recall the comment made to me by a young African student whom I met in a Moscow cafe. "I am surprised," he said, "that the Russians think their system suitable for us Africans. We need food and other necessities of life above all, but the Russians seem to have even less to eat than we do." He had evidently had the opportunity to see what things were like in other places outside the city of Moscow.

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Consumption and Welfare

By Vaclav Holesovsky

The remarks that follow are intended as a corrective to opinions concerning welfare in Soviet-area countries drawn solely from straight quantitative statistics. The issue is the proper interpretation of statistical data—a task which is all too often given up for fear of indulging in guesswork, subjective estimates, or—Heaven forbid!—value judgments. It is part of elementary wisdom concerning the use of statistics that there simply is no way of escaping these "bogey-men." Even the exclusive use of "objective" figures presumably not adulterated by subjective interpretation involves value judgments as to their validity, although in this case they are implied rather than acknowledged.

The principle that we are attempting to defend is that it is more scientific—*i.e.*, more helpful to the search for truth—to be explicit about one's value judgments and to go ahead with the task of interpretation (guesswork, qualitative estimates, etc.) with all the sticking-one's-neck-out that this may require. The results may not have the sharp contours of precision statistics, but they will be more correct and reliable.

The general picture conveyed by consumption statistics in the Soviet-area countries has been one of improvement, not only in relation to wartime and postwar levels but, more significantly, in relation to prewar levels. For instance, indexes of personal consumption in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary [1] show that the highest levels of personal consumption per capita attained before World War II were regained sometime during the 1950's and exceeded noticeably from 1956 on. Such indexes are perforce based on official statistical data published by the countries in question. In this instance, the indexes have been calculated by aggregating into a single measure all the available official series showing consumption goods and services purchased or otherwise obtained by households. This clears them of the accusation of being slanted propagandistically against the regimes in power, but on the other hand it leaves them open to the suspicion of working in favor of those regimes unless subjected to further analysis.

The first qualifying factor to be taken into account is that of quality changes. Some of the Soviet-area regimes not only are aware of a deterioration in the quality of consumption items during their rule, but they admit it openly and try to estimate its extent. Officials of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, for example, have estimated that, "conservatively speaking," the quality of commodities sold in retail trade in Hungary deteriorated by 5 percent between 1938 and 1949, and by another 9-11 percent between 1949 and 1955.[2] A parallel estimate of

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[1] Reference is made to indexes computed (with the present writer's participation) in Columbia University's Project on National Income and Product in East Central Europe and currently being published in mimeographed form. The Czechoslovak index is part of the author's doctoral dissertation, "Personal Consumption in Czechoslovakia, 1937, 1948-1960," Columbia University, 1964.

[2] *Aralakulas Magyarorszagon 1938-ban es 1949-1955-ben, p. 70.*

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quality changes in Poland puts the extent of deterioration there at about 9 percent from 1949 to 1955.[3] If these estimates are taken into account, it becomes evident that the increases recorded in the straight volume of commodities consumed were offset to a substantial extent by declines in quality.

It should be obvious that quality changes can be translated into quantitative terms only where there is some practicable measure of quality: *e.g.*, the caloric content of coal, the fat content of milk, the floor space of dwelling units, the durability of certain articles, etc. There are many other "dimensions" of quality changes that are not amenable to quantification although they do not lack objective manifestations. Thus, in the case of Czechoslovakia, the incidence of diseases of the digestive tract would appear to bear some correlation to the quality of food. These were the only type of infectious diseases subject to reporting whose incidence has increased alarmingly over the years, while that of other infectious diseases has either stabilized or declined.[4]

The diminishing usefulness of an item of consumption, stemming from a variety of causes, is another factor that may sometimes qualify its quantitative availability but which is not readily measurable. Crowding of the means of transportation; poorer content of periodicals, books, radio and television programs; the unattractiveness of articles such as textiles; the amount of maintenance work and servicing required for durables and often not obtainable; shortages of spare parts or complementary items such as batteries for flashlights, etc.—none of these possesses a clear quantitative or, rather, extensive dimension, though all of them have plagued consumers, in different degrees, in all the Soviet-area countries.

Diminishing usefulness can also be the result of improper distribution in space and time. The classic example of an oversupply of bathing suits in winter and skis in summer has had many variations. Although it is difficult to document with figures, newspaper and oral reports convey the impression that the undersupply of goods to small local markets has surpassed anything that could be justified on grounds of the economic cost of carrying a full line of articles in the provinces. Such a development was to be expected since the shift toward non-agricultural employment of rural residents has brought about a new geographical distribution of incomes, while at the same time retail outlets have been reduced in number and subject to concentration. No mail-order houses have been created instead to service outlying areas.

The conditions of undersupply in outlying local markets have caused a spectacular rise in crosscountry travel for shopping purposes, which of course means extra cost to many consumers. People living in Prague, for instance, have been complaining of weekend invasions of metropolitan stores by rural shoppers. Deterioration in sales service, lack of proper wrapping, waiting in line (or paying a fee for "queuing" service provided "commercially," usually by retired persons), lack of choice of articles (*e.g.*, of meat cuts —meat being often sold prepacked on a take-it-or-leave-it basis), etc., are other factors that are tantamount to cost increases or declines in quality.[5]

So far, we have considered the adverse implications, for consumer welfare, of quality changes in the consumption articles themselves. Now we turn to changes in the price that households have to pay for these articles. What is involved here is not the money price, but the real sacrifice that households have to make in terms of labor. The idea is extremely simple: welfare increases if the consumer can enjoy the same volume of consumption while working less, and *vice versa*. This reasoning underlies the usual calculation of real wage rates. It should be applied, in an analogous way, to the estimation of changes in welfare derived from final consumption.

The real price of consumption, conceived in this manner, can change to the detriment of consuming households if one or more of the following items increase: (a) the number of work-hours per worker; (b) the intensity of work per unit of time; (c) the number of earners per capita of population.

As for (a), the workweek has nominally been shortened in at least some of the Soviet-area countries. However, statistics giving the number of hours effectively worked have been rather unreliable, overtime often being imposed unofficially and at normal pay. Besides, in comparison with prewar and early postwar times, the work load of the population has been increased by the institution of labor brigades whose members supply unpaid work during their leisure time for community improvement projects, repair of housing, or help in harvesting.

As for (b), a "stiffening of work norms," or speed-up, has been the rule. That this has been the main factor in the growth of labor productivity in Czechoslovakia has been freely admitted in economic

[3] This estimate appeared in the United Nations publication *Economic Survey of Europe in 1958*, Chapter IV, p. 3, and apparently was derived from an official Polish government communication.

[4] For example, the number of cases of dysentery increased from 1,896 in 1953 to 10,730 in 1960; and of salmonellosis other than typhoid and paratyphoid B, from 1,044 in 1953 to 4,462 in 1960 (see *Statisticka rocenka*, 1962, p. 438). Striking revelations about hygienic conditions in some dairies and their relationship to epidemics were made in *Rude pravo*, August 24, 1963, by the Director of the Research Institute for Epidemiology and Microbiology in Prague. The seriousness of the situation forced the government to take steps to tighten "anti-epidemiological discipline" in the food industry and in the distribution system (see report of government meeting of July 12, 1963, in *Rude pravo*, July 16, 1963).

[5] It is fairly certain that official consumption statistics for certain articles are overstated as they are based on global balances of the articles in question and probably do not make due allowance for spoilage on the way to the final consumer.

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MILAN KRATOCHVÍL

„SPOTŘEBITELI, JAK NÁM VYSVĚTLÍTE, ŽE NAŠE VÝROBKY NEJDOU NA ODBYT?"

"Consumer, how do you explain the fact that our products don't sell?"

—From Dikobraz (Prague), April 16, 1964.

periodicals.[6] To cite a concrete example, in cotton spinning the number of operators per 1,000 spindles fell about 30 percent between 1949 and 1956;[7] and similarly, the number of carding machines and looms operated by one worker more than doubled, under unchanged, or even worse, technical conditions.[8]

After the limit of human endurance had been reached, the upward pressure on performance standards was translated into a relative lowering of hourly wage rates. At that point, if a family desired to maintain or improve its income, it faced the necessity of sending more family members to work. Hence the steady increase in (c), *i.e.*, the rate of labor participation, that can be observed in Soviet-area countries.[9]

Thus, on all three counts, the real price of household income, paid in the form of labor, has increased parallel (if not *pari passu*) with any growth that there may have been in consumption, after taking quality changes into account. To borrow a handy concept from the foreign trade field, the "terms of trade" have been steadily turning against households as "exporters" of labor and "importers" of consumption goods.

In their commendable will to be fair, analysts of consumption trends in Soviet-area countries often insist on taking into account certain services provided by the government in these countries, such as education, culture, health, and social services.[10] However, the major—and, in the author's view, insuperable—problem here is how to convert the changing level of current governmental money expenditures into a meaningful index of the *real* volume of services provided. Even if one adopts one of the possible makeshift methods of arriving at the real volume of services (*e.g.*, by using the number of employees engaged in such services, the number of hospital beds, etc., or by deflating current expenditures with the help of some price index), the fact remains that an overall index of consumption which combines both personal consumption and government services to consumers will usually not differ greatly from an index based on personal consumption alone. This is the result of the statistical interplay of weights assigned to the two component indexes and the growth rates shown by each of them. The relative weight of governmental services to consumers will usually be too small for the differential rate of change to influence the total picture significantly. Moreover,

[6] *E.g.*, see *Statisticky obzor*, XXXVII, No. 2 (1957), p. 56, and *Politicka ekonomie*, XII, No. 5 (1964), p. 384.

[7] F. Egermayer (ed.), *Statistika a demografie*, Prague, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, 1959, pp. 256ff.

[8] *Nova mysl*, Special Issue, June 1956, National Conference of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, p. 172.

[9] The size of the labor force as a percentage of total population in three Soviet-area countries has evolved in the following way:

	Prewar	*Around 1950*	*Around 1960*
Czechoslovakia	36	45	45
Hungary	40	47	53
Soviet Union	36	44	46

Figures for Czechoslovakia and Hungary are estimated from official statistics and census data; those for the USSR are calculated from statistics in U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *The Magnitude and Distribution of Civilian Employment in the USSR: 1928-1959*, Washington, D.C., 1961, p. 55.)

[10] Cf. A. Nove, "Social Welfare in the USSR, "*Problems of Communism*, January-February 1960, and Janet G. Chapman, "Consumption," in A. Bergson and S. Kuznets, eds., *Economic Trends in the Soviet Union*, pp. 253-82.

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governmental services to consumers tend to increase parallel with private consumption.

It should also be pointed out that certain aspects of the governmental services in question seriously diminish their value as supplements to current private consumption. To mention some of these aspects, (a) such services have, to some extent, the character of investment outlays (*e.g.*, education is really, in part, an investment in "human capital" rather than a final consumption item, and to that extent it does not add anything to *current* consumer welfare, however productive it may turn out to be in the future); (b) they sometimes duplicate services which are already included in certain items of personal consumption (such as the theater, movies, books and pamphlets); (c) they record "spurious growth" to the extent that they represent services formerly performed by households themselves (*e.g.*, children's crêches and nurseries); (d) they sometimes cover activities serving production directly (*e.g.*, collection of old paper, bones, and scrap metals by teachers and school children; organizing children's and students' labor brigades); (e) some of them have rather a negative value from the viewpoint of the citizen (*e.g.*, government propaganda; the supervisory functions of the health services with respect to work attendance, and of the cultural services with respect to censorship, etc.); (f) their growth may to some extent reflect a deterioration of welfare conditions (*e.g.*, there is a hidden connection between hygienic conditions, frequency of illness, industrial accidents, etc., and the volume of medical care). If all these qualifications are duly considered, the danger of overemphasizing the contribution of governmental services to welfare becomes evident.

A number of other points seem worthy of brief mention. One is the significance of the phenomenal increase in private transportation from the standpoint of consumer welfare. Such an increase normally raises the rate of growth of the consumption index. However, what exactly is the welfare significance of increased commuting (one of the household's familiar "business expenses"), which has contributed heavily to the increase in travel—mainly because of the increasing diffusion of job-domicile patterns due to industrialization? Then there are certain consumption categories—such as alcohol, tobacco, etc.—whose growth may rightly be interpreted as symptomatic of an underlying social malaise or a decline in so-called "non-economic welfare." It is not too farfetched, in the author's opinion, to take into account a sort of "consumption escapism" in weighing the welfare significance of consumption.[11]

Going one step further, one might raise the question whether the subjective feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction on the part of consumers should be accepted as the only indisputable criterion of welfare. The cultural and time horizons of consumers may be too limited for them to be aware of the possible negative consequences of certain improvements in consumption. The observer, in the author's view, is entitled to expand his notion of welfare and to judge consumption growth in the light of probable, though not immediately apparent, side effects, changes in values, and other more distant consequences. As an example, let us merely note that the vaunted increase in the availability of consumer durables in the Soviet-area countries has admittedly played the role of a powerful work incentive and stabilizer of the social and political system. This way of looking at welfare, by applying value standards which transcend those of the observed subjects, may be less a sign of arrogance than of simple concern and social responsibility.

The interpretation of statistical data bearing on consumer welfare is certainly a complex and difficult undertaking. However, this should be no reason for basing judgments only on raw consumption statistics and, out of a false scientism, simulating ignorance of all relevant nonstatistical information.

[11] It may be objected that similar considerations are applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, to consumption trends in non-Soviet countries as well. This would be a relevant objection if the analysis made intercountry comparisons. However, here we have been concerned with changes in a given country, or group of countries, over time; hence, all the changes in question strike us as highly relevant to the formation of judgments concerning consumption and welfare trends in the countries concerned.

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Youth Meets in Moscow

By Philip G. Altbach

The "World Forum of Solidarity of Youth and Students in the Fight for National Independence and Liberation, for Peace," held September 16-24 in Moscow, provided an interesting example of the Sino-Soviet ideological conflict at work at an international meeting, as well as an indication of trends in the world student movement. The "Forum," as it was popularly called, was proposed more than a year ago by the Committee of Youth Organizations of the USSR, the official Soviet youth federation. Soon after the initial call, an "International Preparatory Committee" was formed and preliminary plans were set in motion. The financial and technical support of the Soviet youth organizations provided the impetus for the gathering.

According to the organizers, invitations were sent to all national and international youth organizations asking for their participation and support. While this claim was exaggerated, as we shall see, youth organizations from more than 100 nations took part. Geopolitically, however, the representation was unbalanced. The major student and youth organizations from Western Europe and North America were conspicuous by their absence. Of the large Western unions of students, only French representatives participated. Although there was a handful of participants from non-Communist student political organizations in the West, most groups stayed away because they considered the Forum purely a propaganda maneuver by the pro-Soviet youth organizations.

By contrast, the attendance from Asia and Africa was fairly wide-ranging. Massive publicity, carried out by such Soviet-oriented international organizations as the International Union of Students and the World Federation of Democratic Youth, as well as by the "Permanent Secretariat" of the Forum, was effective in attracting a large number of organizations from the emerging nations. Emphasis on the themes of national independence and liberation appealed to non-Communist student and youth groups from the new countries, as well as to the various movements for national liberation in such colonies as Angola, Mozambique, and Portuguese Guinea. Typical of the mixed nature of some country delegations was that from India, which included representatives from the Youth Congress, the farmers' organizations and other national associations, along with the Communist youth groups.

It is vitally important to understand the motives of the Soviet regime—operating through the youth organization—in calling the Forum. This venture involved transporting more than 1,000 youth leaders from five continents, housing them in the best hotels in Moscow, and showering them with guided tours, gifts, and lavish hospitality: thus the cost to the Soviet government was not inconsequential. What made the investment worthwhile?

Obviously, the convocation of the Forum was linked to the Sino-Soviet rift. The fact that the Soviets were able to call such a meeting before the Chinese did was a substantial victory for them. (The Chinese delegation, which was quite vocal and numbered more than 40, was almost completely outflanked throughout the Forum proceedings

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and did not make a particularly good impression on most of the delegates.) Given the current flux in the international youth movement and in world politics generally, the Forum gave the Soviets a chance to show their concern for the national liberation and anti-colonialistic movements in the new nations. It was essential for them to take the initiative away from the Chinese in the area of support for anti-colonial revolutions. It was also important for them to articulate their position before a large audience prior to the proposed forthcoming meeting of Communist parties. Finally, the long-apparent ineffectuality of such international "front" groups as the World Federation of Democratic Youth probably impelled the Soviets to experiment with a new organizational set-up which could attract a wider audience. Thus the World Youth Forum came at a crucial time for the Soviets and will probably provide the framework for continued action on the youth front.

International meetings of this type have their own inner logic and rhythm which is often difficult for the uninitiated observer to discern. Since the Soviet youth federation had issued the initial call for the conference, it was then able to control the International Preparatory Committee and the Permanent Secretariat (which sat in Moscow for several months prior to the Forum). The Secretariat, in turn, controlled which organizations were invited and which groups received financial help for transportation and accommodations. Thus it was possible for the Soviets to invite a small but "reliable" youth organization in Senegal, while ignoring the representative pro-government Movement of Progressive Youth. Another example of misrepresentation was the United States delegation, which consisted of four delegates from extremely small and ineffectual American youth groups (the DuBois Clubs and the Students for Peace and Disarmament of Madison, Wisconsin). These groups repeatedly spoke "in the

Which Account Do You Read?

The final meeting of the World Forum of Solidarity of Youth and Students . . . ended today with the adoption of the principal document—the declaration. . . . The Forum listened to the reports of all five commissions and adopted them with an overwhelming majority. The discussion of the reports and numerous resolutions—some 100—was very animated. . . .

After the [final] declaration had been adopted, a representative of the delegation of the People's Republic of China, which had not taken part in the vote, took the floor. He spoke of his [own] draft declaration. This was a last pitiful attempt by the Chinese delegation to frustrate the spirit of unity and cohesion which had been established at the Forum.

The declaration of the Forum was endorsed amid scenes of tremendous enthusiasm. An ovation swept the hall for 20 minutes. The delegates rose to their feet, and, holding hands, chanted "peace" and "friendship," and sang the "anthem of democratic youth." They waved national flags and flowers over their heads.

"This manifestion of youth clearly shows the tremendous success of our Forum," the chairman said. "It will go down in the history of the international youth and students movement."

—TASS International Service in English, broadcast from Moscow, Sept. 24, 1964.

The last plenary session of the Forum . . . was a prearranged show for repulsive stage effects. Hastily collected "spectators" filled the gallery of the first floor and the whole of the second floor. Having read out the draft declaration to which many delegates had voiced their opposition, the chairman tried to put it to the vote at once.

A Chinese delegate mounted the platform. . . . [He] declared that the draft declaration set forth many important principles which are altogether wrong and with which his delegation could not agree. The Chinese delegation, he said, opposed the adoption of this draft as a finalized document of the Forum. . . .

An Indonesian delegate then . . . stated that his delegation deeply deplored what had happened at the Forum since its beginning and that it had decided not to participate in the voting.

Many delegates stayed away from the voting on the draft declaration, while many others voted against it or abstained.

When the draft declaration was adopted, as was stage-managed, the professional cheerers in the hall shouted and applauded, and the Forum came to a close amidst this prearranged noise.

—NCNA International Service in English, broadcast from Peking, Sept. 26, 1964.

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name of American youth," despite the fact that the 2,000,000-member US National Student Association refused to participate in the Forum and the smaller non-Communist Student Peace Union was flatly told that it could send no more than one delegate and would receive no financial assistance.

The body responsible for conducting the Forum itself was the Presidium, appointed by the International Preparatory Committee and "approved" by voice vote at the first plenary session. Thus the presiding body was in a direct organizational and political line from the conference initiators. From the start, the Forum was tightly controlled by the pro-Moscow youth organizations. Moves by the Chinese and their allies to increase the size of the Presidium and to include organizations more favorable to their point of view failed.

The proceedings of the Forum were divided into three sections. The work of the initial plenary sessions was to decide on the rules of procedure, which had been drafted by the Secretariat, and to listen to reports by various organizations selected by the International Preparatory Committee. All voting was conducted by the rather questionable method of shouted approval without any opportunity for delegates to register negative votes or abstentions—a method that was adopted against the wishes of a number of delegations besides the Chinese. Although the time limit for the opening reports was 20 minutes, several groups took more than an hour; the only organizations strictly held to the time limit were those unfavorable to the Soviet position. Later in the conference, other Chinese protests against procedures of the Presidium were shouted down by the audience.

To insure unchallenged Soviet control, the Secretariat also gave the Presidium power to appoint the governing bodies of five commissions in which the substantive work of the Forum was to take place. After the plenary sessions, the conference broke up into these commissions, which were devoted to different aspects of the struggle for national liberation, economic and political development in the new nations, and the peace movements. Unfortunately, insufficient time was arranged for the commission sessions, and many delegations wishing to speak were not able to do so. Nevertheless, a fairly wide range of differing viewpoints was presented. The announced purpose of the commissions was to gather the various viewpoints and insights of the delegates into reports to be presented to the final plenary sessions of the Forum. Yet, perhaps predictably, many of the viewpoints expressed in the commissions were not reflected in the final reports presented to the plenary body.

The closing sessions of the Forum were devoted to approving the reports of the commissions and accepting a final document prepared by the Presidium. Approvals were obtained without much difficulty, despite vociferous objections from the Chinese delegation and its allies. Declarations favoring peaceful coexistence among nations of differing social systems and presenting concrete proposals for disarmament were particularly objectionable to the Chinese. The final document of the Forum reflected the Soviet regime's two-sided concern to continue promoting a relaxation of tensions between the great powers, while at the same time bowing to the tremendous pressures from China and other nations to increase the militancy of "anti-imperialist" struggles and to support national liberation movements. It is clear that the dominant anti-Western, and particularly anti-American tone of the Forum was motivated by the Soviets' need to cover their left flank while maintaining their policies essentially unchanged.

Evaluation of such an international meeting is difficult, particularly at such close range. Certainly the Forum can be considered a partial success for the Soviets. Through careful planning and firm control, they assured that their ideological position would dominate the proceedings, and it was duly supported by the final resolutions adopted. At the same time, the Soviets were able to demonstrate their interest in the developing nations, and the offers of specific aid that were proffered went a long way toward cementing this impression of concern. The very fact that they were able to attract delegations from such a wide range of youth organizations in Asia and Africa could be counted as a success for the Soviets.

On Rock 'n Roll and Revolutionaries

. . . the idea that there are things that have no connection with politics, namely the cultural life of the youth, has a very serious influence on the continuation of the revolution. It is impossible to become a strong anti-imperialist youth if one's daily work is to praise the decadent way of life of the deteriorating imperialist cultural . . . . Twist, rock 'n roll, banal songs and the wild behavior of the Beatles are very dangerous enemies in the life of the youth, the generation which will play an important role in the future. Only "revolutionaries" who have lost their revolutionary fire are saying in a disgusting way that twist, rock 'n roll, strip tease and the like could give enjoyment in the work of building socialism!

—From "The Role of Youth in the Struggle for National Independence and Liberation for Peace," report of the Indonesian delegation to the World Youth Forum.

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Yet while the Forum was something of an organizational *coup* for Moscow, the seeds of discord were nevertheless manifest and deep. At least 18 delegations abstained from approving the final document, and at a later meeting these 18 broke completely with the Soviets. More than 100 delegates went directly from Moscow to Peking to compose and issue a dissenting statement. There is no doubt that the radical stance of the Chinese, coupled with their recent revolutionary experience and the racial overtones of their "anti-imperialist" position, exercises a strong attraction for some of the Asian and African youth groups. The fact that the Soviet Union is now a "developed" European power pursuing its own national interests is probably the most powerful argument for the Chinese position among such youth.

Among delegates not wholly committed to the Soviet or Chinese viewpoint, the reaction was mixed and in some cases ambivalent. In private discussions among delegates, there were many expressions of impatience and even disgust at the extent to which the Sino-Soviet dispute dominated the proceedings. The militant inflexibility of the Chinese stance seemed to make a poor impression on most delegates, and even those inclined toward a pro-Chinese position, such as the Indonesian group, expressed their concern over the amount of time and energy taken up by this issue. On the other hand, most of the uncommitted delegates realized that one of the main motives behind the Forum was the Soviet regime's desire to deal a blow to the Chinese. Among these groups "a plague on both your houses" attitude seemed to be fairly prevalent. Some Asians and Africans privately expressed the opinion that too much time was also wasted on the clichés of "imperialism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism," the mainstay of the rhetoric of such meetings. Others, particularly the Africans, felt that the discussions and debates had little relevance to the needs and problems of their own nations and movements. And some criticized the one-sidedness and superficiality of the discussions as being intellectually dishonest.

Yet whatever their private reservations, most of the Asian and African delegates were unwilling to air their criticisms of the Forum in public. And the fact remains that most of the delegations voted to approve the final Forum document even if they were not entirely happy with it. Indeed, a number of those who were critical of the procedures imposed by the Soviets seemed nevertheless relatively pleased with the general results and resolutions of the Forum.

The content of the declarations of the World Youth Forum is much less important than the implications of the meeting for future trends in the Communist-oriented international youth movement. One of the most significant Soviet moves at the Forum was a proposal to set up a so-called "International Solidarity Fund" to channel Soviet and other aid to national liberation movements and to provide technical and financial assistance to new nations. This "Fund" could form the nucleus of a new international movement aimed at wooing non-aligned and pro-Chinese youth in Asia and Africa, taking the edge off the Chinese position and binding the youth organizations of the new nations to Moscow. It is obvious that Peking will fight tooth and nail against such a spread of Soviet influence; and while the Chinese and their supporters were an immobilized minority at the Forum, there is no gainsaying the appeal of their ideological position for some Asian and African groups. Clearly, the divisive forces at work in the Communist camp have produced a state of flux on the youth front that could result in important organizational changes in the near future.

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